THE EPIC OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

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THE EPIC OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

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THE EPIC OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

SELECTED PASSAGES ARRANGED IN CHRONOLOGICAL SEQUENCE WITH THEIR HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

By

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INTRODUCTORY NOTE

No one, I suppose, would deny that in the ancient Hebrew writings as collected in the Old Testament there is to be found some of the finest literature of all time. Equally no candid reader would deny that the pure gold of these books is mixed with much that is of baser metal.

> The stones thereof are the place of sapphires,
> And it hath dust of gold,

but the stones are many and hard, and the man who would find the sapphires and the gold must "put forth his hands upon the flinty rock and overturn the mountains by the roots". Unfortunately few of us have time for overturning mountains, and we forgo the treasures they contain. This book is an attempt to save the reader the labour of doing his own mining, and to furnish him with the pure metal purged from its alloy.

The mere selection of the finest passages of the Old Testament, however, is not enough. There remain two substantial obstacles in the path of the reader who embarks upon the Old Testament in its usual form.

The first is the arrangement of its constituent parts. The first sixteen books no doubt, from Genesis to Nehemiah, present no difficulty on this score. They form a fairly continuous historical record in reasonable chronological order.[1] But after that, the reader has little or no guide to the period to which the books relate. This is perhaps comparatively unimportant as regards the next six books, Esther, Job, the Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Songs, for most of the beauty and much of the interest of these books is independent of their date. The problem presented in the book of Job, for instance, might have been, and indeed has been, discussed at many times and in many places during the last three thousand years. Many of the Psalms again are so loosely related to particular national events, that their dates are quite uncertain. Or, to take a last instance, many of the Proverbs and much of Ecclesiastes might have been written at any time from Solomon to, say, Lord Chesterfield. But the remaining books of the Old Testament, from Isaiah to Malachi, are in a very different case. The Hebrew prophets have suffered severely from the unfortunate name that has been attached to them. They are constantly supposed to have been occupied primarily in foretelling events some centuries ahead of their own time, whereas in fact their immediate concern was the affairs of their own day. They were in the main keen politicians, interested in current affairs both abroad and at home.

[1] But see Note A, The sources and dates of the books of the Old Testament.

In foreign politics they gave shrewd advice as to the relations of their own country with neighbouring nations, while in domestic politics they fought with enthusiasm for the reform of the social injustices which they saw around them. Their message no doubt was for all times and all peoples owing to the lofty ideas which lay behind it, and the beauty of much of their writings contains an irresistible appeal even when they are torn from their setting. But the prophetical books are for the most part anchored in contemporary history; they were occasioned by contemporary events, and were meant for contemporary effect. It follows that they lose much of their force and interest unless they are read in connexion with the events to which they relate.

A single instance will make this clear. The apparently peaceful lines

> Thy Shepherds slumber, O King of Assyria,
> Thy Worthies are at rest,

embody as relentless a bitterness, as terrible an irony as any lines in literature. Even at the end of a song of triumph over a fallen foe where every resource of invective and insolence seems to be exhausted, they make the reader gasp with their cold and ruthless fury. But this effect is to a great extent lost unless the reader remembers the long harrying of the Jews by the most cruel nation of antiquity. Let him go to the British Museum and see the Assyrians putting out the eyes of their prisoners and flaying them alive and he will understand what Nahum felt when Nineveh fell. So might a veteran French General, gazing on the mangled corpses of German officers at the end of the late war, have exclaimed:

> Thy *Shepherds* slumber, O King of Prussia,
> Thy *Worthies* are at rest;

but the depth of his irony would have been lost on the bystander who was not acquainted with the relations of the two countries during the previous fifty years.

Now this connexion between the prophetical books and their historic background is often difficult for the reader to follow. The books are not arranged in chronological order. Amos, for instance, the earliest of the Prophets, comes eighth in the Canon of the Old Testament; Nahum, who writes of the fall of Nineveh in 607 B.C., comes twelfth, while Ezekiel, who wrote later, during the Captivity, comes fourth; and so on. The most confusing book of all is that of Isaiah, of which the first thirty-nine chapters refer, in the main, to the period 740–700 B.C., while the remainder was written, in the main, some 150 years later and refers to a totally different era, though there is nothing to warn the reader of the transition. One would have to imagine documents relating to the reign of George IV tacked on to others of the reign of Charles II, translated into a foreign

language so as to disguise the style, and published as the work of a single author, to secure an analogy to the book of Isaiah as printed in the Old Testament. The fact that many of the prophets begin with a statement of the kings in whose reigns they delivered their message does not seriously help the ordinary reader.

It will be seen that an arrangement under which most of the vital parts of the Old Testament are presented in such chronological disorder makes it extremely difficult to follow or appreciate them. But if the reader surmounts this obstacle, he finds another before him. He is used, in the case of all other literature, to find the printer coming to his help. Poetry is printed in separate lines; in a drama the names of the speakers are given; narrative is printed as prose; and so on. This is no doubt a modern convention; but it is one to which the modern reader is so accustomed that he is apt to be confused and lost without it. Yet none of this typographical apparatus is used in the Old Testament as usually printed. History, laws, lyrics, drama—everything alike is reduced to the dead level of separate 'verses', which frequently form a complete disguise of the matter in point. To pursue the analogy suggested above, one would have to take, say, Green's *Shorter History*, a play of Shakespeare, some old ballads, some modern lyrics, a few Factory Acts, some laws on naturalization and public health, and some of Pusey's sermons, mix them together, divide the whole into exactly similar 'verses' and print them without headings, to get a result which from a literary point of view could be compared with the Old Testament in the Authorized Version.[1]

The present book is an attempt to remove these two obstacles from the path of the ordinary reader. In the first place the literature of the Old Testament has been sorted out and the finest parts of it presented in chronological order and with such short historical notes as make clear the sequence of events to which the selected passages refer.[2] In the second place the usual typographical conventions have been followed so as to present the material in the form in which the modern reader would expect to find it.

It seems hardly necessary to say that the working out of this idea has presented many doubts and difficulties, about which a few words of explanation may not be amiss.

It is to be hoped that the insertion of a few dates will not dismay the reader. They have unpleasant associations. Yet the use of them in this book seemed to be the only convenient way of linking up the literature and the history of the Old Testament with other events in the ancient world, and I venture to think that they add a real interest to the reading of the Bible. If for instance we accept the view that the Exodus took place about 1230 B. C., the insertion

[1] The Revised Version of course goes a long way, but by no means all the way, to remove the difficulties mentioned in this paragraph.

[2] The reader will also find in Note C at the end of this volume a few notes and tables on the principal powers of the Ancient World which he will find helpful.

of this date enables us to imagine an Egyptian who had suffered under the Ten Plagues recounting his adventures to the soldiers round the camp fires of Troy. We find the Kingdom of Israel drawing to its inglorious close while the Roman Empire is being born—Amos and Hosea struggling to warn their countrymen of their approaching end while Romulus was building his stronghold on the Palatine hill. Later on, after the Jews had returned from the Great Captivity, they must have watched the birth of the Athenian Empire, sending their conscripts to Marathon and Salamis. While Nehemiah was editing the historical books of the Old Testament in Jerusalem, Herodotus would be wandering about the East collecting materials for his own history. The interest of such chronological coincidences would appear to counterbalance any unfortunate impression caused by the occasional insertion of a few unobtrusive dates.[1]

As regards the typographical form given in this book to those extracts which are treated as 'poetry', it need only be said that that form has no authority whatever, and is adopted solely as a matter of convention. However poetical the thoughts and sentiments of Hebrew writers, their actual modes of expression bore little, if any, resemblance to those of classic or modern poets. It must be understood therefore that the presentation in this book of the more poetical parts of the Old Testament in the form of poetry does not imply that such manner of printing in any way reproduces the original form of the Hebrew. No such implication is intended. The 'poetic' form is adopted merely because to a reader used to modern methods of printing, there seems something incongruous in finding highly poetical and imaginative thoughts given in the form of prose.

As regards the actual passages selected, some serious omissions will at once be noticed; but they are intentional, and, I think, justifiable. The most beautiful of the Psalms, for instance, have little or no historical association, and are moreover so well known that it seemed superfluous to quote them in a work of this kind. The stories of the patriarchal period are equally well known and in any case are so long that they do not lend themselves to quotation. They must be read as a whole or not at all. For similar reasons no extracts are given from the beautiful book of Ruth or from Esther. A special apology must be made for the comparative neglect of the book of Job. The texture of this wonderful book is so close, the argument so logical, the unity so complete, that it would be useless to try to read it piecemeal. Apart from these omissions, it is hoped that the passages selected for reproduction will commend themselves as giving a fair and well-balanced idea of the Old Testament as a whole.

[1] It should be understood that many of the dates are somewhat conjectural. They are all taken, however from reliable sources and may be accepted as substantially accurate.

As regards the translations used in this book, most of the passages are quoted from the Revised Version of the Old Testament. But it was impossible to resist the temptation to give illustrations also of some of the earlier translations of the Bible. During the two centuries and a half that preceded the issue of the Authorized Version in 1611, various translators, Wyclif, Tyndale, Coverdale, and many others published versions of their own, all of which contributed their share to the definitive version of 1611. The best of these early translations are of a wonderful freshness, and their simplicity and raciness, though unsuitable for public use and inadequate to express the finer and more poetic passages, seem peculiarly suited to the more simple lyrics and unsophisticated narratives of the earlier times. While, however, some use of the earlier versions seems entirely proper, there is no obvious method for using them. I have merely followed the simple plan of using the oldest versions for the most primitive traditions without prejudice to the conjectural dates at which the older Hebrew stories were first devised, or written down, or edited. Thus for the story of the Creation I have used the first Wyclifite version, which dates from about 1380; for the story of the Fall, I have used the Wyclifite revision of about 1390. For the Flood and the Tower of Babel I have used Tyndale's version of 1530. As the story moves on, I have used the various versions which were put out in the sixteenth century, making the dawn of more or less authentic history synchronize with the use of the Authorized Version, keeping, however, the original form of this version during the first few extracts from it. The arrangement may perhaps be criticized as rather fanciful; but its faults will probably be overlooked in return for the beauty and naïve originality of the passages which have been given in their early forms. I have also added in an Appendix one quotation from the Vulgate and one from the Septuagint. The ordinary reader hears so often of these historic versions of the Bible but comes across them so seldom, that I have thought he might appreciate a short sample of each of them.

One thing remains to be said. Two obstacles to the reading of the Old Testament have been referred to above. There is a third and a more serious one. Many people, even those with spiritual or literary inclinations, merely pass the Old Testament by. Some of them remember that it has been the inspiration of some very unpleasing characters in history. To others there clings about the book a sense of unreality due to unfortunate teaching in childhood. Still others have a vague impression that the Higher Criticism has exploded the Old Testament as a veracious record, and that it consists largely of unreliable folk-lore which was compiled in its present form many centuries after the events which it records and manipulated to suit the views of the compilers. These damaging half-truths have put the Old Testament out of court for a large public.

To any who hold these views, whether consciously or unconsciously, I would venture to make the following suggestion. At the lowest, the Old Testament has been one of the greatest formative influences of modern civilization, and its power is comparable only with the legacies of Greece and Rome. It contains some of the best stories, the best poetry, the best drama, and the profoundest thought of any work that the world has yet seen. Let any one therefore who at present passes it by, read it as they would any famous classic. Let them assume, if they will, that it is not 'inspired' except as Aeschylus and Shakespeare are inspired; that they will find in it historical discrepancies and mistakes, the erroneous suppositions of an unscientific age, at times a deplorably low standard of morality, and statements that could only have been believed in a very credulous time. Let them assume all that, so long as they come to the book with an open mind. They will find they have entered a treasure-house of great price.

If it be objected that this attitude towards the Bible is lacking in reverence, I would submit that the only really gross irreverence towards the Old Testament is to ignore it.[1]

[1] A short list of books on the Ancient East and on the Old Testament will be found in Notes B and C at the end of this volume.

PART I. HISTORY

PROLOGUE

THE BEGINNING OF THINGS

In language of extreme simplicity and dignity the scene is prepared on which the national drama is to be played.

I. THE CREATION

In the firste made God of nou3t heuene and erthe. The erthe forsothe was veyn with ynne and void, and derknessis weren vpon the face of the see; and the Spiryt of God was born vpon the watrys.

And God seide, Be maad li3t; and maad is li3t. And God saw3 li3t, that it was good, and deuydid li3t fro derknessis; and clepide li3t, day, and derknessis, ny3t. And maad is euen and moru, o day.

Seide forsothe God, Be maad a firmament in the myddel of watres, and dyuyde it watres fro watrys. And God made the firmament, and dyuydid watris that weren vndre the firmament fro thes that weren aboue the fermament; and it is maad so. And God clepide the firmament, heuene. And maad is euen and moru, the secounde day.

God forsothe seide, Gadrid be watris, the whiche ben vndre heuene, in to o place, and apere the drie; and maad it is so. And God clepid the drie, erthe; and the gaderyngis of watris he clepide, sees. And God sai3 that it was good; and saith, Burion the erthe grene erbe and makynge seed, and appletre makynge fruyt after his kynd, whos seed ben in hym silf, vpon the erthe; and maad it is so. And the erthe brou3te forthe grene erbe and makynge seed aftre his kynde, and tree makynge fruyt, and echon hauynge seed after his special kynde. And God sai3 that it were good. And maad is euen and moru, the thrid day.

God forsothe seide, Be ther maad li3t 3yuers[1] in the firmament of heuene, and deuyde thei dai and ny3t; and be thei into signes, and tymes, and daies, and 3eers; and li3tne thei in the firmament of heuene, and li3tne thei the erthe; and maad it is so. And God made two greet li3t 3yuerys, the more li3t 3yuer that it were bifore to the day, and the lesse li3t 3yuer that it were bifore to the ny3t, and sterres. And he putte hem in the firmament of heuene, that thei shulden 3yue li3t vpon the erthe, and that thei were bifore to the day and to the ny3t, and shulde deuyde li3t and derknessis. And God sai3 that it wer good. And maad is euen and moru, the ferthe day.

God also seide, Watres bryng thei forthe the crepynge kynd of

[1] i. e., light givers.

the lyuynge soule, and the fleeinge kynde vpon the erth, vndre the firmament of heuene. And God made of nou3t greet whallis, and al soule lyuyng and mouable, whom watres brou3ten forth into ther special kyndes, and al fleynge thing after his kynd. And God sai3 that it wer good; and blisside to hem, seiynge, Growith, and beth 3e multiplyed, and fulfillith the watres of the see, and the briddis be multiplied vpon the erthe. And maad is euen and moru, the fyueth day.

God forsothe seide, Bryng forthe the erthe soule lyuynge in his kynde, iumentis, and crepynge thingis, and beestis of the erthe, after ther special kyndis; and so it is maad. And God made beestis of the erthe aftir ther special kyndes, iumentis, and al the crepynge thing of the erthe in his kynde. And God sai3 that it wer good; and seith, Make we man to the ymage and oure lickenesse, and bifore be he to the fishis of the see, and to the volatils of heuene, and to the beestis of the erthe, and to al creature, and to al the crepynge thing that moueth in the erthe. And God made of nou3t man to the ymage and his lickenes; to the ymage of God he made hym; maal and femaal he made hem of nou3t. And God blissid to hem, and seith, Growe 3e, and be 3e multiplied, and fulfille 3e the erthe, and sogette[1] 3e it, and haue 3e lordship to the fishis of the see, and to the volatilis of heuene, and to alle thingis hauynge soule that mouen vpon the erthe. And God seyde, Se! Y haue 3ouun to 3ow al erbe brynginge forthe seed vpon the erthe, and alle trees that han in hym silf seed of ther kynde, that thei ben to 3ow into mete; and to alle thingis hauynge soule of the erthe, and to al foule of heuene, and to alle thingis that mouen in the erthe, and in the which is soule 3yuynge lijf, that thei haue for to eet; and maad it is so. And God sai3 alle thingis that he made, and thei weren ful good. And made is euen and moru, the sixte day.

Therfor parfite ben heuene and erthe, and al the anowrnyng[2] of hem. And God fulfillide in the seuenthe day his werk that he made; and he restide the seueneth day fro al werk that he hadde fulfillid; and he blisside to the seuenthe day, and he halwide it; for in it he had sesyd fro al his werk that God shapide that he shulde make. [*From* GENESIS, I and 2. *Transcribed from the first Wyclif version* (*c.* 1380) *as given in Forshall and Madden's edition.*]

2. THE FALL OF MAN

Man and his surroundings therefore were created 'full good'. But man by his own act introduced wickedness and suffering into the Paradise made for him.

But and the serpent was feller than alle lyuynge beestis of erthe, whiche the Lord God hadde maad. Which serpent seide to the womman, Why comaundide God to 3ou, that 3e schulden not ete

[1] i. e., subject. [2] i. e., adorning, decoration.

of ech tre of paradis? To whom the womman answerde, We eten of the fruyt of trees that ben in paradis; sothely God comaundide to vs, that we schulden not ete of the fruyt of the tre, which is in the myddis of paradijs, and that we schulden not touche it, lest perauenture we dien. Forsothe the serpent seide to the womman, ȝe schulen not die bi deeth; for whi God woot that in what euere dai ȝe schulen ete therof, ȝoure iȝen schulen be opened, and ȝe schulen be as Goddis, knowynge good and yuel. Therefor the womman seiȝ that the tre was good, and swete to ete, and fair to the iȝen, and delitable in biholdyng; and sche took of the fruyt therof, and eet, and ȝaf to hir hosebonde, and he eet. And the iȝen of bothe weren openid; and whanne thei knewen that thei weren nakid, thei sewiden the leeues of a fige tre, and maden brechis to hem silf. And whanne thei herden the vois of the Lord God goynge in paradijs at the wynd after myddai, Adam and his wijf hidden hem fro the face of the Lord God in the middis of the tre of paradijs. And the Lord God clepide Adam, and seide to hym, Where art thou? And Adam seide, Y herde thi vois in paradijs, and Y drede, for Y was nakid, and Y hidde me. To whom the Lord seide, Who forsothe schewide to thee that thou were naked, no but for thou hast ete of the tre of which Y comaundide to thee that thou schuldist not ete? And Adam seide, The womman which thou ȝauest felowe to me, ȝaf me of the tre, and Y eet. And the Lord seide to the womman, Whi didist thou this thing? Which answerde, The serpent disseyued me, and Y eet. And the Lord God seide to the serpent, For thou didist this, thou schalt be cursid among alle lyuynge thingis and vnresonable beestis of erthe; thou schalt go on thi brest, and thou schalt ete erthe in alle daies of thi liif; Y schal sette enemytees bitwixe thee and the womman, and bitwixe thi seed and hir seed; sche schal breke thin heed, and thou schalt sette aspies[1] to hir heele. Also God seide to the womman, Y schal multiplie thi wretchidnessis and thi conseyuyngis; in sorewe thou schalt bere thi children; and thou schalt be vndur power of the hosebonde, and he schal be lord of thee. Sothely God seyde to Adam, For thou herdist the voys of thi wijf, and hast ete of the tree, of which Y comaundide to thee that thou schuldist not ete, the erthe schal be cursid in thi werk; in traueylis thou schalt ete thereof in alle daies of thi lijf; it schal brynge forth thornes and breris to thee, and thou schalt ete eerbis of the erthe; in swoot of thi cheer thou schalt ete thi breed, til thou turne aȝen in to the erthe of which thou art takun; for thou art dust, and thou schalt turne aȝen in to dust.

[GENESIS, 3, 1–20. *Transcribed from the second Wyclif version (c.* 1390) *as given in Forshall and Madden's edition.*]

[1] i. e. asps.

3. THE FLOOD

The earth became so full of the wickedness of men that God destroyed them all, except Noah and his family.

And the erth was corrupte in the syghte of god and was full of mischefe. And God loked vpon the erth, ād loo it was corrupte: for all flesh had corrupte his way vppon the erth.

Than sayd God to Noe: the end of all flesh is come before me, for the erth is full of there myschefe. And loo, I wyll destroy them with the erth. Make the an arcke of pyne tree, and make chaumbers in the arcke, and pytch it wythin and wythout wyth pytch. And of this facion shalt thou make it.

The lenth of the arcke shal be . iii . hundred cubytes, ād the bredth of it . l . cubytes, and the heyth of it . xxx . cubytes. A wyndow shalt thou make aboue in the arcke. And wythin a cubyte compasse shalt thou finysh it.

And the dore of the arcke shalt thou sette in y^e^ syde of it: and thou shalt make it with . iii. loftes one aboue an other. For behold I wil bringe in a floud of water apon the erth to destroy all flesh from vnder heaven, wherin breth of life is, so that all that is in the erth shall perish. But I will make myne apoyntement with the, that both thou shalt come in to y^e^ arcke and thy sonnes, thy wyfe and thy sonnes wyves with the.

And of all that lyveth, what soever flesh it be, shalt thou brynge in to the arcke, of every thynge a payre, to kepe them a lyve with the. And male and female se that they be, of byrdes in their kynde, and of beastes in their kynde, and of all maner of wormes of the erth in their kinde: a payre of every thinge shall come vnto the to kepe them a lyve. And take vnto the of all maner of meate y^t^ may be eaten & laye it vp in stoore by the, that it may be meate both for y^e^ and for thē: and Noe dyd acordynge to all that God commaunded hym.

And the LORD sayd vnto Noe: goo in to the arcke both thou and all thy houssold. For the haue I sene rightuous before me in thys generacion . . . For . vii . dayes hence wyll I send rayne uppō the erth . XL . dayes & . XL . nyghtes and wyll dystroy all maner of thynges that I haue made, from of the face of the erth.

And Noe dyd acordynge to all y^t^ the lorde cōmaunded hym: and Noe was . vi . hundred yere olde, when the floud of water came vppon the erth: and Noe went and his sonnes and his wyfe and his sonnes wyves wyth hym, in to the arke from the waters of the floud . . . And the seventh daye the waters of the floud came vppon the erth.

In the . vi . hundred yere of Noes lyfe, in the secōde moneth, in the . xvii . daye of the moneth, y^t^ same daye were all the founteynes of the grete depe broken vp, & the wyndowes of heavē were opened, ād there fell a rayne vpon the erth . XL . dayes and . XL . nyghtes.

. . . & the water increased and bare vp the arcke, ãd it was lifte vp from of the erth. And the water prevayled and increased exceadingly vppon the erth: and the arke went vppõ the toppe of the waters.

And the waters prevayled excedingly above mesure vppõ the erth, so that all the hye hylles which are vnder all the partes of heaven, were covered: evẽ . xv . cubytes hye prevayled the waters, so that the hylles were covered. . . .

Thus was destroyed all that was vppõ the erth, both man, beastes, wormes and foules of the ayre: so that they were destroyed from the erth: save Noe was reserved only and they that were wyth hym in the arke. . . .

And god remẽbred Noe & all ye beastes & all ye catell yt were with hĩ in ye arke. And god made a wynde to blow vppõ ye erth, and ye waters ceased: ãd ye fountaynes of the depe ãd the wyndowes of heavẽ were stopte and the rayne of heaven was forbyddẽ. . . .

And after the ende of . XL . dayes, Noe opened the wyndow of the arke which he had made, ãd sent forth a raven, which went out, ever goinge and cominge agayne, vntyll the waters were dreyed vpp vppon the erth.

Then sent he forth a doue from hym, to wete whether the waters were fallen from of the erth. And when the doue coude fynde no restinge place for hyr fote, she returned to him agayne vnto the arke, for the waters were vppon the face of all the erth. And he put out hys honde and toke her and pulled hyr to hym in to the arke.

And he abode yet . vii . dayes mo, and sent out the doue agayne out of the arke, And the doue came to hym agayne aboute eventyde, and beholde: There was in hyr mouth a lefe of an olyve tre which she had plucked, wherby Noe perceaved that the waters were abated vppon the erth. And he taried yet . vii . other dayes, and sent forth the doue, which from thence forth came no more agayne to him . . . And Noe toke off the hatches of the arke and loked: And beholde, the face of the erth was drye. . . .

And God spake vnto Noe saynge: come out of the arcke, both thou and thy wyfe, ãd thy sonnes and thy sonnes wyues with the. And all the beastes that are with the whatsoever flesh it be, both foule and catell and all maner wormes that crepe on the erth, brynge out with the, and let them moue, growe ãd multiplye vppon the erth. . . .

And Noe made an aulter vnto the Lorde, and toke of all maner of clene beastes and all maner of clene foules, and offred sacrifyce vppon the aulter. And the Lorde smellyd a swete savoure and sayd in his hert: I wyll henceforth no more curse the erth for mannes sake, for the imagynacion of mannes hert is evell, even from the very youth of hym. Moreouer I wyll not destroy from henceforth all that lyveth as I haue done. Nether shall sowynge tyme and harvest, colde, and hete, somere & wynter, daye and nyghte ceasse, as long as the erth endureth . . . Farthermore God spake

vnto Noe & to hys sonnes wyth hym saynge: see, I make my bõd wyth you and youre seed after you . . . This is the token of my bõde which I make betwene me and yow, ãd betwene all lyvynge thyng that is with yow for ever: I wyll sette my bowe in the cloudes, and it shall be a sygne of the appoyntment made betwene me and the erth: So that when I brynge in cloudes vpõ y^e^ erth, the bowe shall appere in y^e^ cloudes. And than wyll I thynke vppon my testament which I haue made between me and yow, and all that lyveth what soeuer flesh it be. So that henceforth there shall be no more waters to make a floud to destroy all flesh.

The bowe shalbe in the cloudes, and I wyll loke vpon it, to remembre the euerlastynge testament betwene God and all that lyveth uppon the erth, what soeuer flesh it be.

[*From* GENESIS, 6, 7, 8, and 9. *Tyndale's Version*, 1530.]

4. THE DISPERSAL OF THE RACES OF MANKIND

The world thus became the home of the nomadic descendants of Noah, who retained the same tongue. But their pride made them dangerous and in order to weaken them God 'mingled their tongues' and scattered them abroad on the earth. Such, according to national legend, was the origin of the different languages and of the separation of the main races of the world.

And all the world was of one tonge and one language. And as they came from the east, they founde a playne in the lande of Synear, and there they dwelled. And they sayd one to a nother: come on, let us make brycke ãd burne it wyth fyre. So brycke was there stone and slyme was there morter. And they sayd: Come on, let vs buylde vs a cyte and a toure, that the toppe may reach vnto heauen. And let vs make us a name, for perauenture we shall be scatered abrode over all the erth.

And the LORde came downe to see the cyte and the toure which the childern of Adã had buylded. And the LORde sayd: See, the people is one and haue one tonge amonge them all. And thys haue they begon to do, and wyll not leaue of from all that they haue purposed to do. Come on, let vs descende and myngell theire tonge even there, that one vnderstonde not what a nother sayeth. Thus y^e^ LORde skatered them from thence vppon all the erth. And they left of to buylde the cyte. Wherfore the name of it is called Babell, because that the LORDE there confounded the tonge of all the world. And because that the LORde from thence, skatered them abrode vppon all the erth.

[GENESIS, 11, 1–10. *Tyndale's Version*, 1530.]

I

THE SELECTION OF THE CHOSEN PEOPLE

1. THE CALL OF ABRAHAM (*c.* 2100 B. C.)[1]

SUCH *was the early world according to Hebrew tradition. From the descendants of Shem, one of the sons of Noah, was now selected the real ancestor of the nation. Abraham, having migrated from his original home at Ur of the Chaldees to Haran, received there the promise of future greatness for his race.*

And ye LORDE sayde vnto Abram: Get the out of thy countre, and from thy kynred, and out of thy fathers house, in to a londe which I wil shew the. And I wil make of the a mightie people, and wyll blesse the, and make the a greate name, yee thou shalt be a very blessynge. I wil blesse them that blesse the, and curse them that curse the: and in the shal all the generacions of the earth be blessed.

Then wente Abram out, as the LORDE commaunded him, and Lot wente with him. Fyue & seuentie yeare olde was Abrã, whan he wente out of Haran. So Abram toke Sarai his wife, and Lot his brothers sonne, wt all their goodes which they had gotten, and soules which they begat in Harã, and departed to go in to ye londe of Canaan. And whẽ they were come in to the same londe, he wente thorow, tyll he came vnto the place of Sichem, and vnto the Okegroue of More: for ye Cananites dwelt in ye lõde at ye same time....

Now whan Lot was departed from Abram, the LORDE saide unto Abram: Lift vp thine eyes, and loke from the place where thou dwellest, northwarde, southwarde, eastwarde, and westwarde: for all the londe that thou seist, wyll I geue vnto the and to thy sede for euer, and wyll make thy sede as the dust of the earth: so that yf a man can nombre the dust of the earth, he shall nombre thy sede also. Arise, and go thorow the londe, in the length and bredth, for I wyl geue it vnto the.

So Abram remoued his tent, and wente and dwelt in ye Okegroue of Mamre, which is in Ebron, and buylded there an altare vnto the LORDE.

[*From* GENESIS, 12 and 13. *Coverdale's Version*, 1535. *Transcribed from the copy in the British Museum.*]

2. THE PATRIARCHAL TIMES

The promise, however, was to the race, not to Abraham himself. For many years his descendants and their families,—Isaac and Rebekah, Jacob, Esau, Joseph, and his brothers,—lived in patriarchal state in

[1] The date is based on the assumption that the Amraphel of Genesis XIV. 1, is Khammurabi of Babylon (*c.* 2130–2088).

Canaan, neither owning nor conquering the land, but living in neighbourly relations with the native inhabitants.[1]

3. ISRAEL IN EGYPT

After many years of quiet and uneventful growth, the tribe moved down into Egypt during a famine in Syria and settled in the land of Goshen under the protection of their kinsman Joseph, with the friendly acquiescence of the reigning Pharaoh.
Centuries passed; the 'Israelites' sank to the level of conquered slaves, and lived in bondage and misery under their Egyptian taskmasters.[1]

4. MOSES AND THE DELIVERANCE OF THE CHOSEN PEOPLE

In this dark hour of the people's history, Moses, the greatest hero of the race, the real founder of the Hebrew nation, emerged as their leader and saviour, and delivered them from the Egyptians.

Vpon a tyme whan Moses was greate, he wente forth vnto his brethren, and loked vpon their burthens, and sawe that an Ægipciã smote one of his brethren y^e^ Hebrues. And he loked rounde aboute him: and whan he sawe that there was no man, he slew the Ægipcian, and buried him in the sonde.

The next daye he wente forth also, and sawe two men of the Hebrues stryvynge together, and sayde to the vngodly: Wherfore smytest thou thy neghboure? But he sayde: Who made the a ruler or iudge ouer vs? wilt thou slaye me also, as thou slewest the Ægipcian? Thẽ was Moses afrayed, and sayde: How is this knowne? And Pharao herde of it, and sought for Moses, to slaye him. But Moses fled from Pharao, and kepte him in the lande of Madian, and sat him downe by a wells syde.

The prest Madian had seuen doughters, which came to drawe water, and fylled the troughes, to geue their fathers shepe to drinke. Then came the shepherdes, and droue thẽ awaye. But Moses gat him vp and helped them, and gaue their shepe to drynke. And whan they came to Reguel their father, he saide: How came ye so soone to daie? They sayde: A man of Ægipte delyuered us from y^e^ shepherdes, and drew vnto us, and gave the shepe to drynke. He sayde vnto his doughters. Where is he? Wherfore let ye the man go, that ye called him not to eate with us?

And Moses was content to dwell with the man. And he gaue Moses his doughter Zipora, which bare him a sonne, and he called him Gerson, for he sayde: I am become a straunger in a straunge land. . . .

Moses kepte the shepe of Jethro his father in lawe prest of Madian, & droue the shepe on the backsyde of the wyldernes, and came to the mountayne of God, Horeb. And the angell of y^e^ LORDE appeared vnto him in a flãme of fyre out of the bush. And he sawe

[1] See Introduction, as to the omission of passages illustrating this period.

that ye bushe brent wt fyre, and yet was not consumed, and saide: I wil go hence, and se this greate sight, why ye bush is not brent.

Whan the LORDE sawe, that he wente his waye to se, God called vnto him out of the bush, and sayde: Moses, Moses. He answered: Here am I. He sayde: Come not hither, put thy shues of thy fete, for the place where vpon thou stondest, is an wholy groũde. And he sayde morouer: I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, ye God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses couered his face, for he was afrayed to loke vpon God.

And the LORDE sayde: I haue sene the trouble of my people in Ægypte & haue herde their crye ouer those that oppresse them. I knowe their sorowe, and am come downe to delyuer them from the power of the Ægipcians, and to carye them out of that lõde, in to a good and wyde londe, euen in to a londe that floweth with mylke and hony: namely, vnto the place of the Cananites, Hethites, Amorites, Pheresites, Heuytes & Jebusites. For so moch now as the complaynte of the children of Israel is come before me, I haue sene their oppression wherwith the Ægipcians oppresse them: Go now yr waye therfore, I wil sende the vnto Pharao, that thou mayest brynge my people the children of Israel out of Ægipte. Moses sayde vnto God: Who am I, yt I shulde go vnto Pharao, and brynge the children of Israel out of Ægypte?

He sayde: I wyll be with the: & this shall be the token yt I haue sent the. Whan thou hast brought my people out of Ægipte, ye shal serue God upon this mountayne. Moses sayde vnto God: Beholde, whan I come to the childrẽ of Israel, and saye vnto them: The God of youre fathers hath sent me vnto you, & they saye vnto me: What is his name? what shal I saye vnto them? God saide vnto Moses: I wyl be what I wyll be. And he sayde: Thus shalt thou saye vnto ye children of Israel: I wyl be hath sente me vnto you. And God sayde morouer vnto Moses: Thus shalt thou saye vnto the children of Israel: The LORDE God of youre fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, ye God of Jacob hath sent me vnto you, this is my name for euer, and my memoriall from childe to childes childe. Go thy waye therfore, and gather the elders of Israel together, and saye vnto them: The LORDE God of youre fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob hath appeared vnto me, and sayde: I haue vysited you, and sene what is done vnto you in Ægipte, and haue sayde: I wil brynge you out of the trouble of Ægipte, in to ye lande of ye Cananites, Hethites, Amorites, Pheresites, Heuites & Jebusites: in to a lõde yt floweth with mylke and hony. And yf they heare yr voyce, then shalt thou and the elders of Israel go in to the kynge of Ægipte, and saye vnto him: The LORDE God of ye Hebrues hath called vs. Let vs go now therfore thre dayes iourney in the wyldernes, yt we maye do sacrifice vnto the LORDE oure God.

But I knowe, that the kynge of Ægipte wil not let you go, but

thorow a mightie hãde. For I will stretch out myne hande, & smyte Ægipte w^t all maner of wonders which I will do therin: after y^t shal he let you go. And I wil geue this people fauoure in the sight of the Ægipcians: so that whan ye go forth, ye shal not go forth emptie: but euery wife shal borowe of hir neghbouresse & of her that sogeourneth in hir house, Jewels of syluer and golde and rayment: those shal ye put vpon your sonnes and doughters, and spoyle the Ægipcians.

[*From* EXODUS, 2 and 3. *Coverdale's Version*, 1535. *Transcribed from the copy in the British Museum.*]

Pharaoh, summoned by Moses to let the Israelites go, refused and brought upon himself the ten plagues of Egypt. Terrified by these plagues, Pharaoh at last let the Israelites go, but repented quickly of his decision. The Egyptians pursued the Israelites to force them back, but were themselves destroyed in the waters of the Red Sea. Their destruction and the miraculous deliverance of the Israelites is told in the 'Song of Moses'.

The Song of Moses

Then Moses & y^e chyldrẽ of Israel sange this songe vnto the Lorde & sayd:

Let us synge vnto the Lord, for he is become glorious,
  Y^e horse & him y^t rode upõ hym hath he ouerthrowne in the see.
The Lorde is my strength & my songe,
  And is become my saluacion.
He is my God and I wyll glorifye hym,
  He is my fathers God & I will lifte him up an hye.
The Lorde is a man of warre,
  Jehouah is his name:
Pharaos charettes and his hoste hath he cast in to y^e see.
  His iolye captaynes are drowned in the redd see,
The depe waters haue couered thẽ:
  They soncke to the botome as a stone.
Thyne hand Lorde is glorious in power,
  Thyne hãd Lorde hath all to dashed the enemye.
And wyth thy greate glorye thou hast destroyed thyne aduersaries,
  Thou sentest forth thy wrath & it consumed them, euen as stobell.
With the breth of thyne anger the water gathered to gether
  And the flodes stode styll as a rocke,
  And the depe water congeled to gether in the myddest of the see.
The enemye sayde: I wyll folowe & ouer take thẽ, and wyll deuyde the spoyle:
  I wyll satysfye my lust upon them:
  I wyll drawe my swerde, and myne hande shall destroye them.
Thou bluest with thy breth & the see couered thẽ,
  & they sancke as leed in the mighty waters.

Who is lyke unto the o Lorde amonge goddes:
Who is lyke the so glorious in holynes,
Feerfull, laudable & that shewest wondres?
Thou stretchedest out thy ryght hande,
And the erth swalowed thẽ.
And thou cariedest with thy mercye this people which thou delyueredest,
& broughtest them with thy strength vnto thy holy habitacyõ.
The nacyõs hearde, and were afrayed,
Pãges came upon the Philistines.
Than the dukes of the Edomytes were amased,
And tremblynge came vpon the myghtiest of the Moabites,
And all the inhabiters of Canaã waxed faynte harted.
Let feare and dreade fall vpon them thorow the greatnesse of thyne arme,
& let them be as styll as a stone:
Whyle thy people passe thorow O Lorde, whyle the people passe thorowe, which thou hast goten.
Brynge them in, and plant them in the mountayns of thyne enherytaunce,
The place Lord which thou hast made for to dwell in,
The sanctuary Lorde, which thy handes haue prepared.
The Lorde raygne euer & all waye.

[EXODUS, 15, 1–18. *Matthew's Bible*, 1537. *Transcribed from the copy in the British Museum. The arrangement of the lines is not in the original.*]

The migration from Egypt to Canaan

(*c.* 1230 B.C.)

The people that escaped from Egypt were in no way fit for the future that lay before them. For forty years they lived a nomad life in the desert under the leadership of Moses, who laid the foundations of their laws and their religion, and welded them into an instrument fit to fight for their promised inheritance. At the end of this period of probation, Moses, having assembled all the people on the east side of the Jordan over against Jericho, thus addressed them. He promised the blessings of the Lord if the nation would hearken diligently to His voice, but threatened them with terrible curses if they hearkened not.

Moses' Blessing and Curse

And Moses and the Preastes the Leuytes spake vnto all Israel sayinge: take hede & heare (O Israel) this daye thou art be come the people of the Lorde thy God. Thou shalt herken therfore vnto the voyce of the Lorde thy God, and do his commaundemẽtes, and his ordinaunces whych I cõmaund the this daye. . . .

If thou shalt herken diligẽtly vnto the voyce of the Lord thy

God, and obserue ãd do all hys commaundementes, whych I commaunde the this daye, The Lorde wyll set the on hye aboue all nacions of the erth. And all these blessynges shall come on the, and ouertake the, yf thou shalt herken vnto the voyce of the Lord thy God. Blessed shalt thou be in the towne, & blessed in the feldes: blessed shalbe the frute of thy body, and the frute of thy grounde, and the frute of thy cattell, the frute of thyne oxen, & the flockes of thy shepe: blessed shall be thy basket and thy store. Blessed shalt thou be, when thou goest out, and blessed when thou comest in. The Lorde shall geue ouer thine enemyes that rise agẽst the, y^{t} they maye fall before thy face. They shall come out agenst the one waye, and flee before the seuen wayes. The Lord shall put y^{e} blessynge upõ the in thy store houses, & in all that y^{u} settest thyne hande to, & will blesse the in the lande which the Lorde thy God geueth the.

The Lorde shall make the an holye people vnto hym selfe, as he hath sworen vnto the: yf thou shalt kepe the commaundementes of the Lorde thy God, and walke in hys wayes.

And all nacions of the erth shall se, that the name of y^{e} Lord, is called vpõ ouer the, & they shalbe aferde of the. And the Lord shall make the plentuous in goodes, in the frute of thy body, in y^{e} frute of thy catell, ãd in the frute of thy grounde, in the lande whych the Lorde sware vnto thy fathers, to geue the.

The Lorde shall open vnto the his good treasure, euen the heauen to geue rayne vnto thy land in due ceason, and to blesse all the laboures of thyne hande. And y^{u} shalt lende vnto many nacions, but shalt not borowe thy selfe. And the Lord shalt set the before and not behynde, & thou shalt be aboue only, and not beneth: yf that thou herkẽ vnto the commaundementes of the Lorde thy God, which I commaunde the this daye, to kepe ãd to do them. And se that thou bowe not asyde from any of these wordes, which I cõmaund the this daye, ether to the ryght hande or to the lefte, that thou woldest goo after straunge goddes to serue them.

But and yf thou wylt not herken vnto the voyce of the Lorde thy God, to kepe & to do all his commaundementes and his ordinaunces, which I commaund y^{e} this daye: all these curses shall come vpon the, and ouertake the: Curssed shalt y^{u} be in y^{e} towne, and curssed in the felde: curssed shall be thy baskett, & thy store. Curssed shall be the frute of thy body, and the frute of thy lande, and the frute of thyne oxen, and y^{e} flockes of thy shepe. Curssed shalt thou be whẽ thou goest in, & curssed when thou goest out. The Lord shall sende vpon the, curssynge, destruction, and rebuke in all that y^{u} settest thyne hande to, and that thou doest: vntyll he destroye y^{e} and bring the to nought quyckely, because of the wickednesse of thyne inuencions, and because thou hast forsaken me. The Lorde shall make the pestilẽce cleaue vnto the, vntyll he haue consumed the from of the lande, whether thou goest to enioye it. The

Lorde shall smyte the with swellynge, with feuers, heet, burnynge, and with the swerde, with wetherynge, and with blastynge. And they shall folowe the vntyll thou peryshe.

And the heauen that is ouer thy head shalbe brasse, and the erthe that is vnder the, yron. The Lorde shall turne the rayne of ye lande vnto powder and dust: euẽ from heauen shall they come doune vpon the, vntyll thou be brought to nought. And the Lorde shall plage the before thyne enemyes: Thou shalt come out one waye agenst them, and flee seuen wayes before them, and shalt be scatered amonge all the kyngdomes of the erthe. And thy carkesse shalbe meate vnto all maner foules of the ayre, and vnto the beastes of the erthe, and no man shall fraye them awaye.

The Lord will smyte ye with the botche of Egypte, and the emarodes, scalle, & maũgenesse, that yu mayest not be healed therof. And ye Lord shall smyte the with madnesse, and blyndnesse and dasynge of herte. Thou shalt grope at noone dayes, as ye blind gropeth in darkenesse, and shalt not prosper in thy wayes. Thou shalt be oppressed wyth wronge, and be polled euermore, & no man shall sucker ye. Thou shalt be betrawthed vnto a wyfe, and another mã shall lye with her. Thou shalt buylde an house, and not dwell therin. Thou shalt also plant a vyneyarde, and shalt not gather the grapes. Thyne oxe shalbe slayne before thyne eyes, and thou shalt not eate therof. Thyne asse shalbe violently takẽ awaye euẽ before thy face, and shall not be restored to the agayne. Thy shepe shalbe geuẽ vnto thine enemyes, and no man shall rescue them. Thy sonnes and thy daughters shall be geuen vnto another nacion, and thyne eyes shall se it, & dase vpon them all ye daye lõge, and there shalbe no mighte in thyne hande. The frute of thy land & all thy laboures shall a nacion which thou knowest not, eate, and thou shalt continually soffre violẽce onely, & be oppressed alwaye: so that thou shalt be cleane besyde thy selfe, for the syghte of thyne eyes which thou shalt se.

The Lorde shall smyte the in the knees and legges, with a myscheuous botche that can not be healed: euen from the sole of thy fote vnto the toppe of thy head.

The Lorde shall brynge the and thy kynge (which thou shalt sett ouer the) vnto a nacion, which nether thou nor thy fathers haue knowne, that there thou mayest serue straunge Goddes: euẽ wodd and stone. And thou shalt be wondred at, spoken of, & iested at amonge all nacions, whether the Lorde shall carye the. Thou shalt carye moch seed out in to the feld, and shalt gether but lytle in: for ye greshoppers shall destroye it. Thou shalt plante a vyneyarde and dresse it, but shalt nether dryncke of the wyne, nether gether the grapes, for the wormes shall eate it. Thou shalt haue oliue trees thorow out all thy coastes, but shalt not anoynte thy selfe with ye oyle, for thine olyue trees shalbe roted out. Thou shalt beget sonnes, and daughters, but shalt not haue them: for they shalbe

caryed awaye captyue. All thy trees and frute of thy lande shalbe marred wyth blastynge.

The straunger that is amonge you, shall clyme aboue the vp on hye, & thou shalt come doune beneth alowe. He shall lende the, & thou shalt not lende him: he shall be before, ād thou behynde.

Moreouer, all these curses shall come vpon the, and shall folowe the and ouertake the, tyll thou be destroyed: because thou herkenedst not vnto the voyce of the Lorde thy God, to kepe his commaundementes, and his ordinaunces, whych he commaunded the, and they shalbe vpon the as miracles and wonders, and vpon thy seed foreuer, because thou seruedst not the Lorde thy God wyth ioyfulnesse and wyth a good herte, whan thou haddest abundaunce of all thynges, therfore thou shalt serue thyne enemye, whych the Lorde shall sende vpon the: in hunger and thyrst, in nakednesse, and in nede of all thynge: and he shall putt a yocke of yron vpon thy necke, vntyll he haue broughte the to nought.

And the Lord shall bringe a nacion vpon the from a farre, and from the ende of the worlde, as swifte as an egle flyeth: a nacion whose tonge thou shalt not vnderstande: a harde fauoured nacyon, which shall not regarde the person of the olde, nor haue compassyon on the younge. The same shall eate the frute of thy catell, and the frute of thy londe, vntyll he haue destroyed the: ād shall leaue the nether corne, wyne, nor oyle, nether the encrease of thyne oxen, nor the flockes of thy shepe: vntyll he haue brought the to nought. And he shall kepe the in, in all thy cytyes, vntyll he haue cast downe thy hye walles and stronge holdes, wherin thou trustedst, thorow out all the lande. And he shall besege the in all thy cytyes thorow out all thy lande, whych the Lorde thy God hath geuen the.

And thou shalt eate the frute of thyne awne bodye: the flesh of thy sonnes, and of thy daughters, whych the Lorde thy God hath geuē the, in that straytenesse and sege, wherwith thyne enemye shall besege the: so that it shall greue the man (that is tender & exceadynge delycate amonge you) to loke on hys brother and vpō his wyfe that lyeth in hys bosome, and on the remnaunte of his children, which he hath yet lefte: for feare of geuyng (vnto anye of them) of y^e^ flesh of his childrē, whom he shall eate, because he hath nothing left hym in that straytenesse & sege, wherwith thyne enemye shall besege the in all thy cyties.

Yee and the woman that is so tender and delycate, that she dare not aduenture to sett the sole of her foote vpon the grounde, (for softnesse and tendernesse) shalbe greued to loke on her husbande that lyeth in her bosome, and on her sonne and on her daughter: and on her chyldren whych she shall beare: For whan all thynges lack, she shall eat them secretly, in the sege & straytenesse, wherwith thyne enemye shall besege the in thy cyties.

If thou wylt not kepe and do all the wordes of thys lawe (that are wrytten in thys boke) and feare thys gloryous and fearfull name of

the Lord thy God: the Lord will sende vnto the and thy seed, greate plages and of longe continuaunce, euell sicknesses and of longe duraunce. Moreouer he wyll brynge vpon y^e^ all the diseases of Egipte, and those whych thou wast afrayed of shall cleaue vnto the. And all maner sickenesses, and all maner plages which are not wrytten in the boke of this lawe, wyll the Lorde brynge vpon the, vntyll he brynge the to noughte. And ye shalbe lefte fewe in nõbre, where before ye were as the starres of heauen in multitude: because thou woldest not herken vnto the voyce of the Lorde thy God.

And it shall come to pas, y^t^ as the Lord reioysed ouer you, to do you good, & to multiplye you: euen so he wyll reioyse ouer you, to destroye you, & to brynge you to nought. And ye shalbe wasted from of the lãd, whether thou goest to enioye it. And the Lorde shall scater the amonge all nacyons, from the one ende of the worlde vnto the other, and there thou shalt serue straunge goddes, whych thou nor thy fathers haue knowne: euen wodd and stone.

And amonge these nacyons y^u^ shalt fynd no ease, neither shall y^e^ sole of thy foote haue rest. But the Lorde shall geue the there an vnquyet herte, and dasyng eyes, and sorowe of mynde. And thy lyfe shall hange before the, and thou shalt feare both daye, and nyghte, and shalt haue no trust in thy lyfe. In the morning thou shalt saye, wolde God it were nyght. And at night thou shalt saye: wolde God it were mornynge: for feare of thyne herte whych thou shalt feare, and for the syghte of thyne eyes, which thou shalt se.

And the Lord shall brynge y^e^ into Egipt agayne with shyppes, by the waye which I bade the, that thou shuldest se it no moare. And there ye shalbe solde vnto youre enemies, for bondmen and bondwemen: and no man shall bye you.

[*From* DEUTERONOMY, 27 and 28. *Transcribed from the copy of the first edition of the Great Bible*, 1539, *in the British Museum.*]

Moses' last words and death

Now this is the blessing wherewith Moses the man of God blessed the childrẽ of Israel before his death, & said,

'The Lord came from Sinai, and rose vp from Seir vnto them, and appeared clearely from mount Paran, and he came with ten thousands of Saintes, and at his right hand a firy Lawe for them.

. . . . . .

And of Ioseph he said,

Blessed of the Lord is his land for the swetenes of heauẽ, for the dewe, and for the depth lying beneth, and for the swete increase of the sunne, and for the swete increase of the moone, and for the swetenes of the top of the ancient mountaines, and for the swetenes of the olde hilles, and for the swetenes of the earth, & abũdance thereof: & the good wil of him that dwelt in the bushe, shal come vpon the head of Ioseph, and vpon the top of the head of him that was separated from his brethren. His beautie shalbe like his first

borne bullocke, and his hornes as the hornes of an vnicorne: with them he shal smite the people together, euen the ends of the worlde: these are also the ten thousands of Ephraim, and these are the thousands of Manasseh.

. . . . . .

There is none like God, ô righteous people, which rideth vpon the heauens for thine helpe, & on y^e^ cloudes in his glorie. The eternal God is thy refuge, and vnder his armes thou arte for euer: he shal cast out the enemie before the, and wil say, Destroy them.

Thẽ Israel the foũteine of Iaakob shal dwel alone in safety in a land of wheat & wine: also his heauẽs shal drop the dewe.

Blessed art thou, ô Israel: who is like vnto thee, ô people saued by the Lord, y^e^ shylde of thine helpe, & which is y^e^ sworde of thy glorie? therefore thine enemies shalbe in subiection to thee, & thou shalt tread vpõ their hie places.'

. . . . . .

Then Moses went from the plaine of Moab vp into mount Nebo vnto the top of Pisgah that is ouer against Iericho: and the Lord shewed him all the lãd of Gilead, vnto Dan, and all Naphtali and the land of Ephraim and Manasseh, and all the land of Iudah, vnto the vtmost sea: and the South, and the plaine of the valley of Iericho, the citie of palmetrees, vnto Zoar. And the Lord said vnto him, This is y^e^ land which I sware vnto Abraham, to Izhak & to Iaakob, saying, I wil giue it vnto thy sede: I haue caused thee to se it with thine eyes, but y^u^ shalt not go ouer thither.

So Moses the seruant of the Lord dyed there in the land of Moab, according to y^e^ worde of the Lord. And he buryed hĩ in a valley in y^e^ lãd of Moab ouer against Beth-peor, but no mã knoweth of his sepulchre vnto this day. Moses was now an hũdreth & twẽty yere olde whẽ he dyed: his eye was not dimme, nor his natural force abated . . . There arose not a Prophet since in Israel like vnto Moses (whome the Lord knewe face to face) in all the miracles and wonders which the Lord sent him to do in the land of Egypt before Pharaoh and before all his seruants, and before all his land, and in all that mighty hand and all that great feare, which Moses wroght in the sight of all Israel.

[*From* DEUTERONOMY, 33 and 34. *Transcribed from the copy of the original Geneva version of* 1560 *in the British Museum.*]

5. THE STRUGGLE FOR CANAAN

(*c.* 1200–1050 B.C.)

The people of Israel, led by Joshua, quickly obtained a footing in their new home, and divided the land between them according to their tribes. But they were lacking in cohesion and continuous leadership, and for some 200 *years failed to achieve national unity or permanent mastery of the country. They were free from interference from the great Empires of*

Assyria and Egypt; but the old inhabitants of the country fought persistently for their own ascendancy and did not finally succumb till the days of David and Solomon. The children of Israel, torn by tribal jealousies and with no central government, lived a precarious and war-worn existence, with alternative periods of subjection to hostile nations and of freedom secured by local heroes or 'judges'. It was a rude and barbarous age, when everyone fought for his own hand and did what was right in his own sight. A typical episode is the story of Deborah.

The story of Deborah

And the children of Israel began agayne to do wickedly in y^e^ sight of the Lord, when Ahud was dead.

And the Lorde sold them into the hand of Jabin king of Chanaan, that raigned in Hazor, whose captayne of warre was called Sisara, which dwelt in Haroseth of the gentiles.

And the children of Israel cried vnto the Lord (for he had nine hundreth charettes of yron: & twentie yeres he troubled the children of Israel very sore).

And Debora a prophetisse, the wife of Lapidoth, judged Israel the same time.

And the same Debora dwelt vnder a paulme tree, betweene Ramath & Bethel, in mount Ephraim: And the children of Israel came vp to her for judgment.

And she sent, and called Barak the sonne of Abinoam, out of Kedes Nephthalim, and sayd vnto him: Hath not the Lorde God of Israel commaunded, saying: Go, and drawe toward mount Thabor, and take with thee ten thousand men of the children of Nephthalim, and of the children of Zabulon?

And I will bring vnto thee to the riuer Kison, Sisara y^e^ captayne of warre, vnto Jabin, with his charettes and his people, and will deliuer him into thyne handes.

And Barak said vnto her, If thou wilt go with me, I will go: But and if thou wilt not come with me, I will not go.

She sayd: I will surely go with thee, but this iourney that thou takest, shall not be for thyne honour: for the Lorde shall sell Sisara into the hande of a woman. And Debora arose and went with Barak to Kedes.

And Barak called Zabulon & Nephthalim to Kedes, and led after him ten thousande men: and Debora went vp with him.

(But Haber the Kenite whiche was of the childrẽ of Hobab, the father in lawe of Moyses, remoued from the Kenites, and pitched his tent vntill the playne of Zaanaim, whiche is by Kedes.)

And they shewed Sisara, that Barak the sonne of Abinoam was gone vp to mount Thabor.

And Sisara gathered together al his charettes, euen nine hundreth charettes of iron, & all the people that were with him from of Haroseth of the gentiles, vnto the ryuer of Kison.

And Debora sayd vnto Barak: Up, for this is the day which the Lorde hath deliuered Sisara into thyne hand: Is not the Lorde gone out before the? And so Barak went downe frõ mount Thabor, and ten thousande men after him.

But the Lorde destroyed Sisara and all his charettes, and all his hoaste with the edge of the sworde, before Barak: so that Sisara lyghted downe of his charet, and fled away on his feete.

But Barak folowed after the charettes and after the hoast, euen vnto Haroseth of the gentiles: And all the hoast of Sisara fell vpon the edge of the sworde, and there was not a man left.

Howebeit Sisara fled away on his feete to the tent of Jael the wife of Haber the Kenite (for there was peace betweene Jabin the king of Hazor, and the houshoulde of Haber the Kenite.)

And Jael went out to meete Sisara, and sayd vnto him: Turne in my lorde, turne in to me, feare not. And whan he had turned in vnto her into her tent, she couered him with a mantell.

And he sayd unto her: Geue me I pray thee a litle water to drincke, for I am thirstie. And she opened a bottle of milke, and gaue him drincke, & couered him.

And agayne he sayd vnto her: Stande in the doore of the tent, and whan any man doeth come and enquere of thee, whether ther be any man here, thou shalt say, naye.

Then Jael Habers wyfe, toke a nayle of the tent, & an hammer in her hande, and went softly vnto him, and smote y^{e} nayle into the temples of his head, and fastened it into the ground (for he slumbred sore, and was wery) and so he died.

And beholde, as Barak folowed after Sisara, Jael came out to meete him, & said vnto him: Come, and I will shewe thee the man whom thou sekest. And when he came in to her tent, behold Sisara lay dead, and the nayle was in his temples.

And so God brought Jabin the kyng of Chanaan into subiection that day before the children of Israel.

And the hand of the children of Israel prospered, and preuayled agaynst Jabin the kyng of Chanaan, vntil they had destroyed Jabin kyng of Chanaan.

The Song of Deborah and Barak

Then Debora and Barak the sonne of Abinoam sange the same day, saying:

Prayse ye the Lord, for the auenging of Israel, and for the people that became so willing.

Prelude [1]

Heare O ye kinges, hearken O ye princes: I, euen I will syng vnto the Lord, I wil prayse the Lord God of Israel.

Lorde, whan thou wentest out of Seir, whan thou departedst out

[1] These headings are taken from the Modern Students' Bible.

of the fielde of Edom, the earth trembled, and the heauens rayned, the cloudes also dropped water:

The mountaynes melted before the lord, euen as dyd Sinai before ye Lord God of Israel.

The Desolation

In the dayes of Samgar the sonne of Anath, in the dayes of Jael, the hye wayes were vnoccupied, and the trauelers walked thorowe bye wayes.

The inhabitants of the townes were gone, they were gone in Israel, vntill I Debora came vp, which came vp a mother in Israel.

They chose new goddes, and then had they the enemie in the gates: was there a shielde or speare seene among fourtie thousande of Israel?

My hearte loueth the gouerners of Israel, and them that are willyng among the people: O prayse ye the Lord.

Speake ye that ryde on fayre asses, ye that dwell by Middin, and that walke by the wayes.

For the noyse of the archers among the drawers of water ceassed, there shall they speake of the righteousnes of the Lorde, his rightousnesse in his vnfensed townes in Israel: Then shal the people of the Lorde go downe to the gates.

The Muster

Up Debora vp, get thee vp, and sing a song: Arise Barac, and leade thy captiuitie captiue, thou sonne of Abinoam.

Then shall they that remayne, haue dominion of the proudest of the people: The Lord hath geuen me dominion ouer the mightie.

Out of Ephraim was there a roote of them agaynst Amalek, and after thee Beniamin among thy people: Out of Machir came rulers, and out of Zabulon they that handell the penne of the writer.

And of Isachar there were princes with Debora, and Isachar, and also Barak, he was sent on foote into the valley: for the diuisions of Ruben [were] great thoughtes of heart.

Why abodest thou among the sheepe foldes, to heare the bleatinges of the flockes? for the diuisions of Ruben, were great thoughtes of heart.

Gilead also abode beyonde Jordane: and why doth Dan remayne in shyppes? Aser cõtinued on the sea shore, and taried in his decayed places.

[But] the people of Zabulon haue ieoparde their lyues euen vnto the death, lyke as dyd Nephthalim in the hye places of the fielde.

The Battle and Rout

The kynges came and fought, then fought ye kynges of Chanaan in Thanach by the waters of Megiddo, and wan no money.

They fought from heauen, euen the starres in their courses fought agaynst Sisara.

The ryuer of Kison swept them away, that auncient ryuer the ryuer Kison: O my soule, thou hast marched valiauntly.

Then were the horse hoofes smitten asunder by the meanes of the praunsings that their mightie men made.

Curse ye the citie of Meros (sayd the angel of the Lord) curse the inhabitants therof: because they came not to helpe the Lord, to helpe the Lorde against the mightie.

The Retribution

Jael the wyfe of Haber the Kenite, shalbe blessed aboue other women, blessed shall she be aboue other women in the tent.

He asked water, and she gaue him mylke, she brought foorth butter in a lordly dysshe.

She put her hande to the nayle, & her ryght hande to the smythes hammer: with the hammer smote she Sisara, & smote his head, wounded him, and pearsed his temples.

He bowed him downe at her feete, he fell downe, and lay styll: At her feete he bowed himselfe, & fell. And whē he had sunke downe, he lay there destroyed.

The mother of Sisara loked out at a wyndowe, and cryed thorowe the lattesse: Why is his charret so long a commyng? Why tary the wheeles of his charettes?

Al the wyse ladyes aunswered her, yea and her owne wordes aunswered her selfe.

Surely they haue found, they deuide the spoyles, euery man hath a damsell or two: Sisara hath a pray of diuers couloured garmentes, euen a pray of rayment dyed with sundry colours, and that are made of nedle worke: rayment of diuers colours and of nedle worke on both sydes, which is meete for him that is chiefe in distributing of y^{e} spoyles.

So perishe all thine enemies, O Lord: But they that loue him, let them be as y^{e} sunne whan he ryseth in his myght.

[JUDGES, 4 and 5. *The Bishops' Bible*, 1568. *Transcribed from the copy in the British Museum.*]

II

THE BEGINNING OF THE PROPHETIC ORDER, AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE MONARCHY

(*c.* 1040–1010 B. C.)

1. SAMUEL, SAUL, DAVID, AND JONATHAN

THE first successful step to end this intolerable state of chaos was taken by the last and greatest of the local 'judges', Samuel. He freed the Israelites temporarily from their worst and most pertinacious enemy, the Philistines, and secured peace for his people. In his old age, the people fearing they would fall back into the old anarchy when his strong hand was removed, resolved to appoint a king to rule over them. The choice fell upon Saul, one of the tragic failures of Jewish History. He succeeded at first in uniting his people and defending them against their enemies. But his dour and jealous temper gradually obtained the mastery over him and his later years were soured by his hatred of his young rival David who was selected by Samuel as his successor. For years David lived as an outlaw, fleeing from place to place, and was only saved from capture by the friendship of Jonathan, Saul's son, or by hiding in the mountains.

David saved by Jonathan

Bvt Dauid also fled from Naioth, which is in Ramatha, and coming spake before Ionathas: What haue I done? what is myn iniquitie, and what sinne of myn against thy father, that he seeketh my life? Who sayd to him: God forbid, thou shalt not die: for neither wil my father doe any thing great or litle, vnles he first tel me: this word therefore only hath my father concealed from me? no this shal not be. And he sware againe to Dauid. And Dauid sayd: Thy father surely knoweth, that I haue found grace in thy sight, and wil say: Let not Ionathas know this, lest perhaps he be sad. Yea more our Lord liueth, and thy soule liueth, by one degree only (as I may so say) I and death are diuided. And Ionathas said to Dauid: Whatsoeuer thy soule shal say to me, I wil doe for thee. And Dauid sayd to Ionathas: Behold the calendes are to morowe, & I after the maner am wont to sitte beside the king to eate: dismisse me therefore that I may be hid in the field vntil the euening of the third day. If thy father looking inquire for me, thou shalt answer him: Dauid desired me, that he might goe quickely into Bethlehem his citie: because there be solemne victimes to al of his tribe. If he shal say, Wel: peace shal be to thy seruant, but if he be angrie, know that his malice is complete. Doe mercie therefore toward thy seruant: because thou hast caused me thy seruant to enter the league of our Lord with thee. but if there be any iniquitie

in me, do thou kil me, and bring me not in to thy father. And Ionathas sayd: Be this farre from thee, for neither can it be, that I should not tel thee, if I shal certainly know that my fathers malice is complete against thee. And Dauid answered Ionathas: Who shal bring me word, if thy father answer thee perhaps any thing sharpely of me? And Ionathas sayd to Dauid: Come, let vs goe forth abroad into the field, and when they were both gone forth into the field, Ionathas said to Dauid: Lord God of Israel, if I shal search out my fathers meaning, to morowe or the day after, and some good thing be vpon Dauid, and I send not immediatly vnto thee, and make thee know thereof, these thinges doe our Lord to Ionathas, and these thinges adde he. But if my fathers malice shal perseuer against thee, I wil reuele thyn care, and wil dismisse thee, that thou mayst goe in peace, and our Lord be with thee, as he hath beene with my father. And if I liue, thou shalt doe me the mercie of our Lord, but if I die, thou shalt not take away thy mercie from my house for euer, when our Lord shal haue rooted out the enemies of Dauid, euerie one out of the land, take he away Ionathas from his house, and our Lord require it of the handes of Dauides enemies. Ionathas therefore made a league with the house of Dauid: and our Lord required it of the handes of Dauids enemies. And Ionathas added to sweare vnto Dauid, because he loued him, for as his owne soule, so he loued him. And Ionathas sayd to him: To morrowe are the calendes, and thou shalt be asked for: for thy sitting wil be inquired of til after to morowe. Thou shalt therefore goe downe in hast, and shalt come to the place, where thou must be hid in the day, when it is lawful to worke, and thou shalt sit beside the stone, which is named Ezel. And I wil shoote three arrowes nere it, and wil shoote as it were excersising my self at a marke. I wil send also a boy saying to him: Goe, and fetch me the arrowes. If I shal say to the boy: Loe the arrowes are on this side thee, take them vp: come thou to me, because there is peace to thee, and there is no euil, our Lord liueth. But if I shal speake thus to the boy: Loe the arrowes are beyond thee: Goe in peace, because our Lord hath dimissed thee. And concerning the word which I and thou haue spoken, our Lord be betwen thee and me for euer.

Dauid therefore was hidde in the fielde, and the calendes came, and the king sate downe to eate bread. And when the king was sette vpon his chaire (according to the custome) which was beside the wal, Ionathas arose, and Abner sate at the side of Saul, and Dauids place appeared voide. And Saul sayd nothing that day, for he thought it had chanced perhaps vnto him, that he was not cleane, nor purified. And when the second day was come after the calendes, againe Dauids place appeared emptie. And Saul said to Ionathas his sonne: Why came not the sonne of Isai neither yesterday, nor to day to eate? Ionathas answered Saul: He desired me instantly, that he might goe into Bethlehem, and he said: Let me goe, because

there is a solemne sacrifice in the citie, one of my brethren hath sent for me: now therefore if I haue found grace in thy sight, I wil goe quickly, and see my brethren. For this cause he came not to the kings table. But Saul being wrath against Ionathas, said to him: Thou sonne of a woman which of her owne accord rauisheth a man, am I ignorant that thou louest the sonne of Isai vnto thyne owne confusion, and to the confusion of thyne ignominious mother? For al the dayes, that the sonne of Isai shal liue vpon the earth, thou shalt not be established, nor thy kingdom. Therefore now presently send, and bring him to me: because he is the sonne of death. And Ionathas answering Saul his father, said: Why shal he dye? what hath he done? And Saul caught a speare to strike him. And Ionathas vnderstood that it was determined of his father, that he would kil Dauid. Ionathas therefore rose from the table in anger of furie, and did not eate bread the second day of the calendes. For he was stroken heauie vpon Dauid, because his father had confounded him. And when the morning appeared, Ionathas came into the field according to the appointment with Dauid, and a little boy with him. and said to his boy: Goe, and fetch me the arrowes, which I shoote. And when the boy had runne, he shotte an other arrowe beyond the boy. The boy therefore came to the place of the arrowe, which Ionathas had shotte: and Ionathas cried behind the back of the boy, and said: Loe the arrowe is there further beyond thee. And Ionathas cried againe behind the back of the boy, saying: Make hast spedely, stand not. And Ionathas his boy gathered vp his arrowes, and brought them to his master: and he was altogether ignorant, what was done: for only Ionathas and Dauid knew the matter. Ionathas therefore gaue his armoure to the boy, and said to him: Goe, and cary them into the citie. And when the boy was gone, Dauid rose out of his place, which did bend to the South, and falling flatt on the ground, adored thrise: and kissing one an other, they wept together, but Dauid more. Ionathas therefore said to Dauid: Goe in peace: what soeuer we haue sworne both of vs in the name of our Lord, saying: Our Lord be betwen me and thee, and betwen my seede and thy seede for euer. And Dauid arose, and departed: but Ionathas also entred into the Citie.

David takes Saul unawares and spares him

And there came Zepheites vnto Saul in Gabaa, saying: Behold Dauid is hid in the hil Hachila, which is ouer against the wildernes. And Saul arose, and went downe into the desert Ziph, and with him three thousand men of the chosen of Israel, to seeke Dauid in the desert Ziph. And Saul camped in Gabaa Hachila, which was ouer against the wildernes in the way: and Dauid dwelt in the desert. And seing that Saul was come after him into the deset, he sent discouerers, and lerned that he was come thither most certainly.

And Dauid arose secretly, and came to the place where Saul was: and when he had seene the place, wherein Saul slept, and Abner the sonne of Ner, the prince of his warre, and Saul sleeping in the tent, and the rest of the multitude round about him, Dauid spake to Achimelech the Hetheit, and Abisai the sonne of Seruia the brother of Ioab, saying: Who wil goe downe with me to Saul into the campe? And Abisai said: I wil goe with thee. Dauid therefore and Abisai came to the people by night, and found Saul lying and sleeping in the tent and his speare fixed in the ground at his head: and Abner, and the people sleeping round about him. And Abisai said to Dauid: God hath shut vp thine enemie this day into thy handes: now therefore I wil thrust him through with my speare in the earth once, and twise shal not neede. And Dauid said to Abisai: Kil him not: for[1] who shal extend his hand vpon the annointed of our Lord, & shal be innocent? And Dauid said: Our Lord liueth, vnlesse our Lord shal strike him, or his day come to die, or descendig into battel he perish: Our Lord be merciful vnto me, that I extend not my hand vpon the annointed of our Lord. now therefore take the speare, which is at his head, and cuppe of water, and let vs goe. Dauid therefore tooke the speare, and cuppe of water, which was at Saules head, and they went away: and there was none that sawe, or vnderstood, or awaked, but al slept, because the dead sleepe[2] of our Lord, had fallen vpon them. And when Dauid had passed ouer against, and stood in the toppe of the mountaine farre of, and a good space betwen them, Dauid cried to the people, and to Abner the sonne of Ner saying: Wilt thou not answer Abner? And Abner answering sayd: Who art thou, that criest and disquietest the king? And Dauid sayd to Abner: Art not thou a man? And who is like thee in Israel? why therefore hast thou not kept thy lord the king? for one of the multitude hath entered in to kil the king thy lord. This thing is not good, which you haue done: Our Lord liueth, you are the children of death, which haue not kept your lord, the annointed of our Lord. Now therefore behold where the kinges speare is, & where the cup of water is, which was at his head. And Saul knew Dauids voice, and sayd: Is this thy voice, my sonne Dauid? And Dauid sayd: My voice, my lord king, and he said: For what cause doth my lord persecute his seruant? What haue I done? or what euil is there in my hand? Now therefore heare, I pray, my lord King, the wordes of thy seruant: If our Lord stirre thee vp against me, let there be odoure of sacrifice: but if the sonnes of men, they are cursed in the sight of our Lord, which haue cast me out this day, that I should not dwel in the inheritance of our Lord, saying: Goe, serue strange goddes. And now let not my blood be shed vpon the earth before our Lord, for the king of

[1] Dauid is resolute, and often repeteth, that it is not lawful for priuate subiectes to kil their prince, no although himselfe was annointed to succede.

[2] Gods prouidence sent this extraordinary sleepe and inspired Dauid to doe this fact, for more iustification of his innocencie.

Israel, is come forth to seeke one flea, as the perdix is pursued in the mountaines. And Saul sayd: I haue sinned, returne my sonne Dauid, for I wil no more doe thee euil, for that my life hath bene precious in thyne eies to day: for it appeareth that I haue done foolishly, and haue bene ignorant of very many thinges. And Dauid answering, sayd: Behold the kings speare, let one of the kings seruants passe, and take it. And our Lord wil reward euerie one according to his iustice; and fidelitie: for our Lord hath deliuered thee this day into my hand, & I would not extend my hand vpon the annointed of our Lord. And as thy life hath bene magnified to day in myne eies, so be my life magnified in the eies of our Lord, and deliuer he me from al distresse. Saul therefore sayd to Dauid: Blessed art thou my sonne Dauid: and truly doing thou shalt doe, and preuayling thou shalt preuaile. And Dauid went into his way, and Saul returned into his place.

And Dauid sayd in his hart: at length I shal fal one day into the handes of Saul: is it not better that I flee, and be saued in the Land of the Philistians, that Saul may despaire, and cease to seeke me in al the coastes of Israel? I wil flee therefore his handes. And Dauid arose, and went himselfe, and the six hundred men with him, to Achis the sonne of Maoch, the King of Geth. And Dauid dwelt with Achis in Geth, he and his men; euerie man & his house, and his two wiues, Achinoam the Iezrahelite, and Abigail the wife of Nabal of Carmel. And it was told Saul that Dauid was fled into Geth, and he added no more to seeke him.

[*From* I SAMUEL, 20, 26, and 27. *Douai Version*, 1609. *From the copy in the London Library*.]

But the tragic end was not far off. Samuel died, and the king was unable to withstand his enemies.

2. THE DEATH OF SAUL AND JONATHAN

Nowe the Philistines fought against Israel: and the men of Israel fled from before the Philistines, and fell downe slaine in mount Gilboa. And the Philistines followed hard vpon Saul and vpon his sonnes; and the Philistines slewe Ionathan, and Abinadab, and Malchishua, Sauls sonnes. And the battell went sore against Saul, and the archers hit him, and he was sore wounded of the archers. Then said Saul vnto his armour bearer, Draw thy sword, and thrust me through therewith, lest these vncircumcised come and thrust me through, and abuse mee. But his armour bearer would not, for he was sore afraid; therefore Saul tooke a sword, and fell vpon it. And when his armour bearer saw that Saul was dead, he fell likewise upon his sword, and died with him. So Saul died, and his three sons, and his armour bearer, and all his men that same day together. And when the men of Israel that were on the other side of the valley, and they that were on the other side Iordane, saw

that the men of Israel fled, and that Saul and his sonnes were dead, they forsooke the cities and fled, and the Philistines came and dwelt in them.

And it came to passe on the morrow when the Philistines came to strip the slaine, that they found Saul, and his three sons fallen in mount Gilboa. And they cut off his head, and stripped off his armour, and sent into the land of the Philistines round about to publish it in the house of their idoles, and among the people. And they put his armour in the house of Ashtaroth: and they fastened his body to the wall of Bethshan. And when the inhabitants of Iabesh Gilead heard of that which the Philistines had done to Saul: All the valiant men arose, and went all night, and tooke the body of Saul, and the bodies of his sonnes from the wall of Bethshan, and came to Iabesh, and burnt them there. And they tooke their bones, and buried them vnder a tree at Iabesh, and fasted seuen days.

Now it came to pass after y^e^ death of Saul, when Dauid was returned from the slaughter of the Amalekites, and Dauid had abode two daies in Ziklag; It came euen to passe on the third day, that behold, a man came out of the campe from Saul, with his clothes rent, and earth vpon his head: and so it was when he came to Dauid, that hee fell to the earth, and did obeysance. And Dauid said vnto him, From whence commest thou? And he said vnto him, Out of the campe of Israel am I escaped. And Dauid said vnto him, How went the matter? I pray thee, tell mee. And he answered, That the people are fled from the battell and many of the people also are fallen and dead, and Saul and Ionathan his sonne are dead also. And Dauid said vnto the yong man that told him, How knowest thou that Saul and Ionathan his sonne be dead? And the yong man that told him, said, As I happened by chance vpon mount Gilboa, behold, Saul leaned vpon his speare; and, loe, the charets and horsemen followed hard after him. And when he looked behind him, he saw me, and called vnto mee: and I answered, Here am I. And he said vnto mee, Who art thou? And I answered him, I am an Amalekite. He said vnto me againe, Stand, I pray thee, vpon me, and slay me: for anguish is come vpon mee, because my life is yet whole in me. So I stood vpon him, and slew him, because I was sure that hee could not liue after that hee was fallen: And I took the crowne that was vpon his head, and the bracelet that was on his arme, and haue brought them hither vnto my lord.

Then Dauid tooke hold on his clothes, and rent them, and likewise all the men that were with him: And they mourned and wept, and fasted vntill Euen, for Saul and for Ionathan his sonne, and for the people of the LORD, and for the house of Israel; because they were fallen by the sword. And Dauid said vnto the yong man that told him, Whence art thou? And he answered, I am the sonne of a stranger, an Amalekite. And Dauid said vnto him, How wast thou not afraid to stretch foorth thine hand, to destroy the LORDS

Anointed? And Dauid called one of the yong men, and sayd, Goe neere, and fall vpon him. And hee smote him, that hee dyed. And Dauid said vnto him, Thy blood be upon thy head; for thy mouth hath testified against thee, saying, I haue slaine the LORDS Annoynted.

3. THE LAMENT OF DAVID OVER SAUL AND JONATHAN

And Dauid lamented with this lamentation ouer Saule, and over Ionathan his sonne:

The beauty of Israel is slaine vpon thy high places:
How are the mightie fallen!

Tell it not in Gath,
Publish it not in the streetes of Askelon:
Lest the daughters of the Philistines reioyce,
Lest the daughters of the vncircumcised triumph.

Yee mountaines of Gilboa,
Let there bee no dewe, neither let there be raine vpon you, nor fields of offerings:
For there the shield of the mightie is vilely cast away,
The shield of Saul, as though hee had not beene annointed with oile.

From the blood of the slaine, from the fat of the mightie,
The bow of Ionathan turned not backe,
And the sword of Saul returned not emptie.

Saul and Ionathan were louely and pleasant in their liues,
And in their death they were not diuided:
They were swifter than Eagles,
They were stronger then Lions.

Yee daughters of Israel, weepe over Saul,
Who clothed you in scarlet, with other delights,
Who put on ornaments of golde vpon your apparell.

How are the mightie fallen in the midst of the battell!
O Ionathan, thou wast slaine in thine high places.

I am distressed for thee, my brother Ionathan:
Very pleasant hast thou beene vnto mee:
Thy loue to mee was wonderfule,
Passing the loue of women.

How are the mightie fallen,
And the weapons of warre perished!

[I SAMUEL, 31, and II SAMUEL, 1. *Text from the original edition of the Authorized Version,* 1611*; phrasing, &c., modern.*]

III

THE GOLDEN AGE (*c.* 1010–933 B.C.)

1. DAVID AS KING

SAUL was succeeded by David with whom began, according to popular tradition, the Golden Age in the national story. It was he who captured the stronghold of Jerusalem, founded the national Kingdom, and raised his people into a position of permanent safety against all but the great empires of the East. He was at the same time the greatest musician of antiquity and one of the great poets of the world.
His character, however, was by no means free from human weakness, and his treatment of Uriah the Hittite brought him into direct conflict with the prophetic order in the person of Nathan and led to many of the serious troubles of his reign.

2. THE STORY OF DAVID, BATH-SHEBA, AND NATHAN

And it came to pass at eventide, that David arose from off his bed, and walked upon the roof of the king's house: and from the roof he saw a woman bathing; and the woman was very beautiful to look upon. And David sent and inquired after the woman. And one said, Is not this Bath-sheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite? And David sent messengers, and took her; and she came in unto him, and he lay with her; (for she was purified from her uncleanness;) and she returned unto her house. And the woman conceived; and she sent and told David, and said, I am with child. And David sent to Joab, saying, Send me Uriah the Hittite. And Joab sent Uriah to David. And when Uriah was come unto him, David asked of him how Joab did, and how the people fared, and how the war prospered. And David said to Uriah, Go down to thy house, and wash thy feet. And Uriah departed out of the king's house, and there followed him a mess of meat from the king. But Uriah slept at the door of the king's house with all the servants of his lord, and went not down to his house. And when they had told David, saying, Uriah went not down unto his house, David said unto Uriah, Art thou not come from a journey? wherefore didst thou not go down unto thine house? And Uriah said unto David, The ark, and Israel, and Judah, abide in booths; and my lord Joab, and the servants of my lord, are encamped in the open field; shall I then go into mine house, to eat and to drink, and to lie with my wife? as thou livest, and as thy soul liveth, I will not do this thing. And David said to Uriah, Tarry here to-day also, and to-morrow I will let thee depart. So Uriah abode in Jerusalem that day, and the morrow. And when David had called him, he did eat and drink before him; and he made him drunk: and at even he went out to lie on his bed with the servants of his lord, but went not down

to his house. And it came to pass in the morning, that David wrote a letter to Joab, and sent it by the hand of Uriah. And he wrote in the letter, saying, Set ye Uriah in the forefront of the hottest battle, and retire ye from him, that he may be smitten, and die. And it came to pass, when Joab kept watch upon the city, that he assigned Uriah unto the place where he knew that valiant men were. And the men of the city went out, and fought with Joab: and there fell some of the people, even of the servants of David; and Uriah the Hittite died also. Then Joab sent and told David all the things concerning the war; and he charged the messenger, saying, When thou hast made an end of telling all the things concerning the war unto the king, it shall be that, if the king's wrath arise, and he say unto thee, Wherefore went ye so nigh unto the city to fight? knew ye not that they would shoot from the wall? who smote Abimelech the son of Jerubbesheth? did not a woman cast an upper millstone upon him from the wall, that he died at Thebez? why went ye so nigh the wall? then shalt thou say, Thy servant Uriah the Hittite is dead also. So the messenger went, and came and shewed David all that Joab had sent him for. And the messenger said unto David, The men prevailed against us, and came out unto us into the field, and we were upon them even unto the entering of the gate. And the shooters shot at thy servants from off the wall; and some of the king's servants be dead, and thy servant Uriah the Hittite is dead also. Then David said unto the messenger, Thus shalt thou say unto Joab, Let not this thing displease thee, for the sword devoureth one as well as another: make thy battle more strong against the city, and overthrow it: and encourage thou him. And when the wife of Uriah heard that Uriah her husband was dead, she made lamentation for her husband. And when the mourning was past, David sent and took her home to his house, and she became his wife, and bare him a son. But the thing that David had done displeased the LORD.

And the LORD sent Nathan unto David. And he came unto him, and said unto him, There were two men in one city; the one rich, and the other poor. The rich man had exceeding many flocks and herds: but the poor man had nothing, save one little ewe lamb, which he had bought and nourished up: and it grew up together with him, and with his children; it did eat of his own morsel, and drank of his own cup, and lay in his bosom, and was unto him as a daughter. And there came a traveller unto the rich man, and he spared to take of his own flock and of his own herd, to dress for the wayfaring man that was come unto him, but took the poor man's lamb, and dressed it for the man that was come to him. And David's anger was greatly kindled against the man; and he said to Nathan, As the LORD liveth, the man that hath done this is worthy to die: and he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity.

And Nathan said to David, Thou art the man. Thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel, I anointed thee king over Israel, and I delivered thee out of the hand of Saul; and I gave thee thy master's house, and thy master's wives into thy bosom, and gave thee the house of Israel and of Judah; and if that had been too little, I would have added unto thee such and such things. Wherefore hast thou despised the word of the LORD, to do that which is evil in his sight? thou hast smitten Uriah the Hittite with the sword, and hast taken his wife to be thy wife, and hast slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon. Now therefore, the sword shall never depart from thine house; because thou hast despised me, and hast taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy wife. Thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house, and I will take thy wives before thine eyes, and give them unto thy neighbour, and he shall lie with thy wives in the sight of this sun. For thou didst it secretly: but I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the sun. And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the LORD. And Nathan said unto David, The LORD also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die. Howbeit, because by this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme, the child also that is born unto thee shall surely die. And Nathan departed unto his house.

And the LORD struck the child that Uriah's wife bare unto David, and it was very sick. David therefore besought God for the child; and David fasted, and went in, and lay all night upon the earth. And the elders of his house arose, and stood beside him, to raise him up from the earth: but he would not, neither did he eat bread with them. And it came to pass on the seventh day, that the child died. And the servants of David feared to tell him that the child was dead: for they said, Behold, while the child was yet alive, we spake unto him, and he hearkened not unto our voice: how will he then vex himself, if we tell him that the child is dead? But when David saw that his servants whispered together, David perceived that the child was dead: and David said unto his servants, Is the child dead? And they said, He is dead. Then David arose from the earth, and washed, and anointed himself, and changed his apparel; and he came into the house of the LORD, and worshipped: then he came to his own house; and when he required they set bread before him, and he did eat. Then said his servants unto him, What thing is this that thou hast done? thou didst fast and weep for the child, while it was alive; but when the child was dead, thou didst rise and eat bread. And he said, While the child was yet alive, I fasted and wept: for I said, Who knoweth whether the LORD will not be gracious to me, that the child may live? But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me. And David comforted Bath-sheba his wife, and went in unto her, and lay with her: and she

bare a son, and he called his name Solomon. And the LORD loved him; and he sent by the hand of Nathan the prophet, and he called his name Jedidiah, for the LORD's sake.

[*From* II SAMUEL, 11, 12.][1]

3. THE REVOLT AND DEATH OF ABSALOM

The late years of David's reign were embittered by the revolt and death of his favourite son Absalom.

Now in all Israel there was none to be so much praised as Absalom for his beauty: from the sole of his foot even to the crown of his head there was no blemish in him. And when he polled his head, (now it was at every year's end that he polled it: because the hair was heavy on him, therefore he polled it:) he weighed the hair of his head at two hundred shekels, after the king's weight.

And it came to pass . . . that Absalom prepared him a chariot and horses, and fifty men to run before him. And Absalom rose up early, and stood beside the way of the gate: and it was so, that when any man had a suit which should come to the king for judgement, then Absalom called unto him, and said, Of what city art thou? And he said, Thy servant is of one of the tribes of Israel. And Absalom said unto him, See, thy matters are good and right; but there is no man deputed of the king to hear thee. Absalom said moreover, Oh that I were made judge in the land, that every man which hath any suit or cause might come unto me, and I would do him justice! And it was so, that when any man came nigh to do him obeisance, he put forth his hand, and took hold of him, and kissed him. And on this manner did Absalom to all Israel that same to the king for judgement: so Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel.

And it came to pass at the end of forty years, that Absalom said unto the king, I pray thee, let me go and pay my vow, which I have vowed unto the LORD, in Hebron. For thy servant vowed a vow while I abode at Geshur in Syria, saying, If the LORD shall indeed bring me again to Jerusalem, then I will serve the LORD. And the king said unto him, Go in peace. So he arose, and went to Hebron. But Absalom sent spies throughout all the tribes of Israel, saying, As soon as ye hear the sound of the trumpet, then ye shall say, Absalom is king in Hebron. And with Absalom went two hundred men out of Jerusalem, that were invited, and went in their simplicity; and they knew not any thing. And Absalom sent for Ahithophel the Gilonite, David's counsellor, from his city, even from Giloh, while he offered the sacrifices. And the conspiracy was strong; for the people increased continually with Absalom.

And there came a messenger to David saying, The hearts of the

[1] The text of this quotation, and of all subsequent quotations in this volume, unless specially marked, is taken from the Revised Version of the Old Testament. As regards the division into separate lines, &c, see page xiv.

men of Israel are after Absalom. And David said unto all his servants that were with him at Jerusalem, Arise, and let us flee; for else none of us shall escape from Absalom: make speed to depart, lest he overtake us quickly, and bring down evil upon us, and smite the city with the edge of the sword. And the king's servants said unto the king, Behold, thy servants are ready to do whatsoever my lord the king shall choose. And the king went forth, and all his household after him.

And David went up by the ascent of the mount of Olives, and wept as he went up; and he had his head covered, and went barefoot: and all the people that were with him covered every man his head, and they went up, weeping as they went up.

And when king David came to Bahurim, behold, there came out thence a man of the family of the house of Saul, whose name was Shimei, the son of Gera: he came out, and cursed still as he came. And he cast stones at David, and at all the servants of king David, and all the people and all the mighty men were on his right hand and on his left. And thus said Shimei when he cursed, Begone, begone, thou man of blood, and man of Belial: the LORD hath returned upon thee all the blood of the house of Saul, in whose stead thou hast reigned; and the Lord hath delivered the kingdom into the hand of Absalom thy son: and, behold, thou art taken in thine own mischief, because thou art a man of blood. Then said Abishai the son of Zeruiah unto the king, Why should this dead dog curse my lord the king? let me go over, I pray thee, and take off his head. And the king said, What have I to do with you, ye sons of Zeruiah? Because he curseth, and because the LORD hath said unto him, Curse David; who then shall say, Wherefore hast thou done so? And David said to Abishai, and to all his servants, Behold, my son, which came forth of my bowels, seeketh my life: how much more may this Benjamite now do it? let him alone, and let him curse; for the LORD hath bidden him. It may be that the LORD will look on the wrong done unto me, and that the LORD will requite me good for his cursing of me this day. So David and his men went by the way: and Shimei went along on the hill side over against him, and cursed as he went, and threw stones at him, and cast dust. And the king, and all the people that were with him, came weary; and he refreshed himself there.

And David numbered the people that were with him, and set captains of thousands and captains of hundreds over them. And David sent forth the people, a third part under the hand of Joab, and a third part under the hand of Abishai the son of Zeruiah, Joab's brother, and a third part under the hand of Ittai the Gittite. And the king said unto the people, I will surely go forth with you myself also. But the people said, Thou shalt not go forth: for if we flee away, they will not care for us; neither if half of us die, will they care for us: but thou art worth ten thousand of us: therefore

now it is better that thou be ready to succour us out of the city. And the king said unto them, What seemeth you best I will do. And the king stood by the gate side, and all the people went out by hundreds and by thousands. And the king commanded Joab and Abishai and Ittai, saying, Deal gently for my sake with the young man, even with Absalom. And all the people heard when the king gave all the captains charge concerning Absalom. So the people went out into the field against Israel: and the battle was in the forest of Ephraim. And the people of Israel were smitten there before the servants of David, and there was a great slaughter there that day of twenty thousand men. For the battle was there spread over the face of all the country: and the forest devoured more people that day than the sword devoured. And Absalom chanced to meet the servants of David. And Absalom rode upon his mule, and the mule went under the thick boughs of a great oak, and his head caught hold of the oak, and he was taken up between the heaven and the earth; and the mule that was under him went on. And a certain man saw it, and told Joab, and said, Behold, I saw Absalom hanging in an oak. And Joab said unto the man that told him, And, behold, thou sawest it, and why didst thou not smite him there to the ground? and I would have given thee ten pieces of silver, and a girdle. And the man said unto Joab, Though I should receive a thousand pieces of silver in mine hand, yet would I not put forth mine hand against the king's son: for in our hearing the king charged thee and Abishai and Ittai, saying, Beware that none touch the young man Absalom. Otherwise if I had dealt falsely against his life, (and there is no matter hid from the king,) then thou thyself wouldest have stood aloof. Then said Joab, I may not tarry thus with thee. And he took three darts in his hand, and thrust them through the heart of Absalom, while he was yet alive in the midst of the oak. And ten young men that bare Joab's armour compassed about and smote Absalom, and slew him. And Joab blew the trumpet, and the people returned from pursuing after Israel: for Joab held back the people. And they took Absalom, and cast him into the great pit in the forest, and raised over him a very great heap of stones: and all Israel fled every one to his tent. Now Absalom in his life time had taken and reared up for himself the pillar, which is in the king's dale: for he said, I have no son to keep my name in remembrance: and he called the pillar after his own name: and it is called Absalom's monument, unto this day.

Then said Ahimaaz the son of Zadok, Let me now run, and bear the king tidings, how that the LORD hath avenged him of his enemies. And Joab said unto him, Thou shalt not be the bearer of tidings this day, but thou shalt bear tidings another day: but this day thou shalt bear no tidings, because the king's son is dead. Then said Joab to the Cushite, Go tell the king what thou hast seen. And the Cushite bowed himself unto Joab, and ran. Then said Ahimaaz

the son of Zadok yet again to Joab, But come what may, let me, I pray thee, also run after the Cushite. And Joab said, Wherefore wilt thou run, my son, seeing that thou wilt have no reward for the tidings? But come what may, said he, I will run. And he said unto him, Run. Then Ahimaaz ran by the way of the Plain, and overran the Cushite.

Now David sat between the two gates: and the watchman went up to the roof of the gate unto the wall, and lifted up his eyes, and looked, and, behold, a man running alone. And the watchman cried, and told the king. And the king said, If he be alone, there is tidings in his mouth. And he came apace, and drew near. And the watchman saw another man running: and the watchman called unto the porter, and said, Behold, another man running alone. And the king said, He also bringeth tidings. And the watchman said, Me thinketh the running of the foremost is like the running of Ahimaaz the son of Zadok. And the king said, He is a good man, and cometh with good tidings. And Ahimaaz called, and said unto the king, All is well. And he bowed himself before the king with his face to the earth, and said, Blessed be the LORD thy God, which hath delivered up the men that lifted up their hand against my lord the king. And the king said, Is it well with the young man Absalom? And Ahimaaz answered, When Joab sent the king's servant, even me thy servant, I saw a great tumult, but I knew not what it was. And the king said, Turn aside, and stand here. And he turned aside, and stood still. And, behold, the Cushite came; and the Cushite said, Tidings for my lord the king: for the LORD hath avenged thee this day of all them that rose up against thee. And the king said unto the Cushite, Is it well with the young man Absalom? And the Cushite answered, The enemies of my lord the king, and all that rise up against thee to do thee hurt, be as that young man is. And the king was much moved, and went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept: and as he went, thus he said, O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!

And it was told Joab, Behold, the king weepeth and mourneth for Absalom. And the victory that day was turned into mourning unto all the people: for the people heard say that day, The king grieveth for his son. And the people gat them by stealth that day into the city, as people that are ashamed steal away when they flee in battle. And the king covered his face, and the king cried with a loud voice, O my son Absalom, O Absalom, my son, my son!

[*From* II SAMUEL, 14–19.]

4. DAVID'S DEATH-BED

Now the days of David drew nigh that he should die; and he charged Solomon his son, saying, I go the way of all the earth: be thou strong therefore, and shew thyself a man; and keep the charge

of the LORD thy God, to walk in his ways, to keep his statutes, and his commandments, and his judgements, and his testimonies, according to that which is written in the law of Moses, that thou mayest prosper in all that thou doest, and whithersoever thou turnest thyself: that the LORD may establish his word which he spake concerning me, saying, If thy children take heed to their way, to walk before me in truth with all their heart and with all their soul, there shall not fail thee (said he) a man on the throne of Israel. Moreover thou knowest also what Joab the son of Zeruiah did unto me, even what he did to the two captains of the hosts of Israel, unto Abner the son of Ner, and unto Amasa the son of Jether, whom he slew, and shed the blood of war in peace, and put the blood of war upon his girdle that was about his loins, and in his shoes that were on his feet. Do therefore according to thy wisdom, and let not his hoar head go down to the grave in peace. But shew kindness unto the sons of Barzillai the Gileadite, and let them be of those that eat at thy table: for so they came to me when I fled from Absalom thy brother. And, behold, there is with thee Shimei the son of Gera, the Benjamite, of Bahurim, who cursed me with a grievous curse in the day when I went to Mahanaim: but he came down to meet me at Jordan, and I sware to him by the LORD saying, I will not put thee to death with the sword. Now therefore hold him not guiltless, for thou art a wise man; and thou wilt know what thou oughtest to do unto him, and thou shalt bring his hoar head down to the grave with blood. And David slept with his fathers, and was buried in the city of David. And the days that David reigned over Israel were forty years: seven years reigned he in Hebron, and thirty and three years reigned he in Jerusalem.

[*From* I KINGS, 2.]

5. THE ACCESSION OF SOLOMON (*c.* 970 B.C.). HIS DREAM

And Solomon sat upon the throne of David his father; and his kingdom was established greatly.

And Solomon made affinity with Pharaoh king of Egypt, and took Pharaoh's daughter, and brought her into the city of David, until he had made an end of building his own house, and the house of the LORD, and the wall of Jerusalem round about. Only the people sacrificed in the high places, because there was no house built for the name of the LORD until those days. And Solomon loved the LORD, walking in the statutes of David his father: only he sacrificed and burnt incense in the high places.

And the king went to Gibeon to sacrifice there; for that was the great high place: a thousand burnt offerings did Solomon offer upon that altar. In Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream by night: and God said, Ask what I shall give thee. And Solomon said, Thou hast shewed unto thy servant David my father great kindness, according as he walked before thee in truth, and

in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart with thee; and thou hast kept for him this great kindness, that thou hast given him a son to sit on his throne, as it is this day. And now, O LORD my God, thou hast made thy servant king instead of David my father: and I am but a little child; I know not how to go out or come in. And thy servant is in the midst of thy people which thou hast chosen, a great people, that cannot be numbered nor counted for multitude. Give thy servant therefore an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and evil; for who is able to judge this thy great people? And the speech pleased the Lord, that Solomon had asked this thing. And God said unto him, Because thou hast asked this thing, and hast not asked for thyself long life; neither hast asked riches for thyself, nor hast asked the life of thine enemies; but hast asked for thyself understanding to discern judgement; behold, I have done according to thy word: lo, I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart; so that there hath been none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee. And I have also given thee that which thou hast not asked, both riches and honour, so that there shall not be any among the kings like unto thee, all thy days. And if thou wilt walk in my ways, to keep my statutes and my commandments, as thy father David did walk, then I will lengthen thy days. And Solomon awoke, and, behold, it was a dream: and he came to Jerusalem, and stood before the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and offered up burnt offerings, and offered peace offerings, and made a feast to all his servants. [*From* I KINGS, 2, 3.]

6. THE REALIZATION OF THE OLD PROMISES TO THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL

And Solomon ruled over all the kingdoms from the River unto the land of the Philistines, and unto the border of Egypt: they brought presents, and served Solomon all the days of his life. And Solomon's provision for one day was thirty measures of fine flour, and three score measures of meal; ten fat oxen, and twenty oxen out of the pastures, and an hundred sheep, beside harts, and gazelles, and roebucks, and fatted fowl. For he had dominion over all the region on this side the River, from Tiphsah even to Gaza, over all the kings on this side the River: and he had peace on all sides round about him. And Judah and Israel dwelt safely, every man under his vine and under his fig tree, from Dan even to Beer-sheba, all the days of Solomon. And Solomon had forty thousand stalls of horses for his chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen. And those officers provided victual for king Solomon, and for all that came unto king Solomon's table, every man in his month: they let nothing be lacking. Barley also and straw for the horses and swift steeds brought they unto the place where the officers were, every man according to his charge.

And God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding exceeding much, and largeness of heart, even as the sand that is on the sea shore. And Solomon's wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the children of the east, and all the wisdom of Egypt. For he was wiser than all men; than Ethan the Ezrahite, and Heman, and Calcol, and Darda, the sons of Mahol: and his fame was in all the nations round about, and he spake three thousand proverbs: and his songs were a thousand and five. And he spake of trees, from the cedar that is in Lebanon even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall: he spake also of beasts, and of fowl, and of creeping things, and of fishes. And there came of all peoples to hear the wisdom of Solomon, from all kings of the earth, which had heard of his wisdom. [I KINGS, 4. 21–34.]

7. THE BUILDING OF THE TEMPLE

And Hiram king of Tyre sent his servants unto Solomon; for he had heard that they had anointed him king in the room of his father: for Hiram was ever a lover of David. And Solomon sent to Hiram, saying, Thou knowest how that David my father could not build an house for the name of the LORD his God for the wars which were about him on every side, until the LORD put them under the soles of his feet. But now the LORD my God hath given me rest on every side; there is neither adversary, nor evil occurrent. And, behold, I purpose to build an house for the name of the LORD my God, as the LORD spake unto David my father, saying, Thy son, whom I will set upon thy throne in thy room, he shall build the house for my name. Now therefore command thou that they hew me cedar trees out of Lebanon; and my servants shall be with thy servants; and I will give thee hire for thy servants according to all that thou shalt say: for thou knowest that there is not among us any that can skill to hew timber like unto the Zidonians. And it came to pass, when Hiram heard the words of Solomon, that he rejoiced greatly, and said, Blessed be the LORD this day, which hath given unto David a wise son over this great people. And Hiram sent to Solomon, saying, I have heard the message which thou hast sent unto me: I will do all thy desire concerning timber of cedar, and concerning timber of fir. My servants shall bring them down from Lebanon unto the sea: and I will make them into rafts to go by sea unto the place that thou shalt appoint me, and will cause them to be broken up there, and thou shalt receive them: and thou shalt accomplish my desire, in giving food for my household. So Hiram gave Solomon timber of cedar and timber of fir according to all his desire. And Solomon gave Hiram twenty thousand measures of wheat for food to his household, and twenty measures of pure oil: thus gave Solomon to Hiram year by year. And the LORD gave Solomon wisdom, as he promised him; and there was peace between Hiram and Solomon; and they two made a league together.

And it came to pass in the four hundred and eightieth year after the children of Israel were come out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month Ziv, which is the second month, that he began to build the house of the LORD. And the house, when it was in building, was built of stone made ready at the quarry: and there was neither hammer nor axe nor any tool of iron heard in the house, while it was in building. So he built the house, and finished it; and he covered the house with beams and planks of cedar.

And the king, and all Israel with him, offered sacrifice before the LORD. And Solomon offered for the sacrifice of peace offerings, which he offered unto the LORD, two and twenty thousand oxen, and an hundred and twenty thousand sheep. So the king and all the children of Israel dedicated the house of the LORD. The same day did the king hallow the middle of the court that was before the house of the LORD; for there he offered the burnt offering, and the meal offering, and the fat of the peace offerings: because the brasen altar that was before the LORD was too little to receive the burnt offering, and the meal offering, and the fat of the peace offerings. So Solomon held the feast at that time, and all Israel with him, a great congregation, from the entering in of Hamath unto the brook of Egypt, before the LORD our God, seven days and seven days, even fourteen days. On the eighth day he sent the people away, and they blessed the king, and went unto their tents joyful and glad of heart for all the goodness that the LORD had showed unto David his servant, and to Israel his people. [*From* I KINGS, 5, 6, 8.]

8. THE DECLINE AND DEATH OF SOLOMON AND THE THREATENED DIVISION OF HIS KINGDOM

Now king Solomon loved many strange women, together with the daughter of Pharaoh, women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Zidonians, and Hittites; of the nations concerning which the LORD said unto the children of Israel, Ye shall not go among them, neither shall they come among you: for surely they will turn away your heart after their gods: Solomon clave unto these in love . . . And the LORD was angry with Solomon, because his heart was turned away from the LORD, the God of Israel, which had appeared unto him twice, and had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods: but he kept not that which the LORD commanded. Wherefore the LORD said unto Solomon, Forasmuch as this is done of thee, and thou hast not kept my covenant and my statutes, which I have commanded thee, I will surely rend the kingdom from thee, and will give it to thy servant. Notwithstanding in thy days I will not do it, for David thy father's sake: but I will rend it out of the hand of thy son. Howbeit I will not rend away all the kingdom; but I will give one tribe to thy son, for

David my servant's sake, and for Jerusalem's sake which I have chosen. [*From* I KINGS, 11.]

The temporal greatness of Israel was therefore short lived. Towards the end of his reign Solomon was assailed by foreign foes and weakened by disaffection at home. He retained his throne during his life, but left a weakened and distracted inheritance to his son Rehoboam, who had not sufficient statecraft to stem the rising tide of revolution, or win the loyalty of the Northern tribes.

And Rehoboam went to Shechem: for all Israel were come to Shechem to make him king. And it came to pass, when Jeroboam the son of Nebat heard of it, (for he was yet in Egypt, whither he had fled from the presence of king Solomon, and Jeroboam dwelt in Egypt, and they sent and called him;) that Jeroboam and all the congregation of Israel came, and spake unto Rehoboam, saying, Thy father made our yoke grievous; now therefore make thou the grievous service of thy father, and his heavy yoke which he put upon us, lighter, and we will serve thee. And he said unto them, Depart yet for three days, then come again to me. And the people departed. And king Rehoboam took counsel with the old men, that had stood before Solomon his father while he yet lived, saying, What counsel give ye me to return answer to this people? And they spake unto him, saying, If thou wilt be a servant unto this people this day, and wilt serve them, and answer them, and speak good words to them, then they will be thy servants for ever. But he forsook the counsel of the old men which they had given him, and took counsel with the young men that were grown up with him, that stood before him. And he said unto them, What counsel give ye, that we may return answer to this people, who have spoken to me, saying, Make the yoke that thy father did put upon us lighter? And the young men that were grown up with him spake unto him, saying, Thus shalt thou say unto this people that spake unto thee, saying, Thy father made our yoke heavy, but make thou it lighter unto us; thus shalt thou speak unto them, My little finger is thicker than my father's loins. And now whereas my father did lade you with a heavy yoke, I will add to your yoke: my father chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions. So Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam the third day, as the king bade, saying, Come to me again the third day. And the king answered the people roughly, and forsook the counsel of the old men which they had given him; and spake to them after the counsel of the young men, saying, My father made your yoke heavy, but I will add to your yoke: my father chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions. So the king hearkened not unto the people; for it was a thing brought about of the LORD, that he might establish his word, which the LORD spake by the hand of

Ahijah the Shilonite to Jeroboam the son of Nebat. And when all Israel saw that the king hearkened not unto them, the people answered the king, saying, What portion have we in David? neither have we inheritance in the son of Jesse: to your tents, O Israel: now see to thine own house, David. So Israel departed unto their tents. But as for the children of Israel which dwelt in the cities of Judah, Rehoboam reigned over them. Then king Rehoboam sent Adoram, who was over the levy; and all Israel stoned him with stones, that he died. And king Rehoboam made speed to get him up to his chariot, to flee to Jerusalem. So Israel rebelled against the house of David, unto this day. And it came to pass, when all Israel heard that Jeroboam was returned, that they sent and called him unto the congregation, and made him king over all Israel: there was none that followed the house of David, but the tribe of Judah only.

[I KINGS, 12.]

The Hebrew temporal empire was over, never to be realized again. For some centuries the two rival Kingdoms of Israel and Judah maintained an independent national life, but both in course of time were merged into the successive empires of the East.[1]

[1] See Note C, p. 219.

IV

THE KINGDOM OF ISRAEL (*c.* 933–722 B.C.)

I. THE DYNASTY OF JEROBOAM

(*c.* 933–887 B.C.)

The sin he made Israel to sin

To secure the continued loyalty of his people, Jeroboam's first preoccupation was to provide them with local shrines to counteract the attractions of Jerusalem.

Then Jeroboam built Shechem in the hill country of Ephraim, and dwelt therein; and he went out from thence, and built Penuel. And Jeroboam said in his heart, Now shall the kingdom return to the house of David: if this people go up to offer sacrifices in the house of the LORD at Jerusalem, then shall the heart of this people turn again unto their lord, even unto Rehoboam king of Judah; and they shall kill me, and return to Rehoboam king of Judah. Whereupon the king took counsel, and made two calves of gold; and he said unto them, It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem; behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. And he set the one in Beth-el, and the other put he in Dan. And this thing became a sin: for the people went to worship before the one, even unto Dan. And he made houses of high places, and made priests from among all the people, which were not of the sons of Levi. And Jeroboam ordained a feast in the eighth month, on the fifteenth day of the month, like unto the feast that is in Judah, and he went up unto the altar; so did he in Beth-el, sacrificing unto the calves that he had made: and he placed in Beth-el the priests of the high places which he had made. And he went up unto the altar which he had made in Beth-el on the fifteenth day in the eighth month, even in the month which he had devised of his own heart: and he ordained a feast for the children of Israel, and went up unto the altar, to burn incense. [*From* I KINGS, 12.]

For this act Jeroboam was counted as having done evil above all that were before him, and the promise made to Abraham was revoked. Israel was to be rooted up out of the good land given to their fathers and scattered beyond the River.

At that time Abijah the son of Jeroboam fell sick. And Jeroboam said to his wife, Arise, I pray thee, and disguise thyself, that thou be not known to be the wife of Jeroboam: and get thee to Shiloh; behold, there is Ahijah the prophet, which spake concerning me that I should be king over this people. And take with thee ten loaves, and cracknels, and a cruse of honey, and go to him: he shall

tell thee what shall become of the child. And Jeroboam's wife did so, and arose, and went to Shiloh, and came to the house of Ahijah. Now Ahijah could not see; for his eyes were set by reason of his age. And the LORD said unto Ahijah, Behold, the wife of Jeroboam cometh to inquire of thee concerning her son; for he is sick: thus and thus shalt thou say unto her: for it shall be, when she cometh in, that she shall feign herself to be another woman. And it was so, when Ahijah heard the sound of her feet, as she came in at the door, that he said, Come in, thou wife of Jeroboam; why feignest thou thyself to be another? for I am sent to thee with heavy tidings. Go, tell Jeroboam, Thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel: Forasmuch as I exalted thee from among the people, and made thee prince over my people Israel, and rent the kingdom away from the house of David, and gave it thee: and yet thou hast not been as my servant David, who kept my commandments, and who followed me with all his heart, to do that only which was right in mine eyes; but hast done evil above all that were before thee, and hast gone and made thee other gods, and molten images, to provoke me to anger, and hast cast me behind thy back: therefore, behold, I will bring evil upon the house of Jeroboam, and will cut off from Jeroboam every man child, him that is shut up and him that is left at large in Israel, and will utterly sweep away the house of Jeroboam, as a man sweepeth away dung, till it be all gone. Him that dieth of Jeroboam in the city shall the dogs eat; and him that dieth in the field shall the fowls of the air eat: for the LORD hath spoken it. Arise thou therefore, get thee to thine house: and when thy feet enter into the city, the child shall die. And all Israel shall mourn for him, and bury him; for he only of Jeroboam shall come to the grave: because in him there is found some good thing toward the LORD, the God of Israel, in the house of Jeroboam. Moreover the LORD shall raise him up a king over Israel, who shall cut off the house of Jeroboam that day: but what? even now. For the LORD shall smite Israel, as a reed is shaken in the water; and he shall root up Israel out of this good land, which he gave to their fathers, and shall scatter them beyond the River; because they have made their Asherim, provoking the LORD to anger. And he shall give Israel up because of the sins of Jeroboam, which he hath sinned, and wherewith he hath made Israel to sin. And Jeroboam's wife arose, and departed, and came to Tirzah: and as she came to the threshold of the house, the child died. And all Israel buried him, and mourned for him; according to the word of the LORD, which he spake by the hand of his servant Ahijah the prophet.

And the rest of the acts of Jeroboam how he warred, and how he reigned, behold, they are written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel. And the days which Jeroboam reigned were two and twenty years: and he slept with his fathers, and Nadab his son reigned in his stead. [*From* I KINGS, 14.]

2. THE DYNASTY OF OMRI (*c.* 887–842 B.C.)

The house of Jeroboam was soon exterminated, root and branch, by Baasha whose house suffered the same fate at the hands of Zimri, captain of half the king's chariots, who left to the king not a single man-child, neither of his kinsfolk, nor of his friends. Having enjoyed the fruits of his treason for seven days, he in turn was surrounded by Omri, another military usurper, and seeing that all was lost, went into the castle of the king's house, and burned the king's house over him with fire and died.

Omri put an end to this civil confusion and established a royal line which lasted for three generations, his son being Ahab and his grandson Jehoram. The dynasty lasted some forty-five years, with Samaria as its capital city, and restored Israel to a position of some strength. During this period Israel first came into contact with the Assyrians, and Omri paid tribute to them. There was also intermittent war with Syria. The predominant feature, however, of the period in the Bible narrative was the religious struggle between the followers of Jehovah and those of Baal. Ahab waged a bitter war against Elijah, which was continued between Jehoram and Elisha, and was only finally settled when Jehu at the instigation of Elisha overthrew the dynasty and founded another of his own.

Ahab and Elijah

The Priests of Baal

And Elijah the Tishbite, who was of the sojourners of Gilead, said unto Ahab, As the LORD, the God of Israel, liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word. And the word of the LORD came unto him, saying, Get thee hence, and turn thee eastward, and hide thyself by the brook Cherith, that is before Jordan. And it shall be, that thou shalt drink of the brook; and I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there. So he went and did according unto the word of the LORD: for he went and dwelt by the brook Cherith, that is before Jordan. And the ravens brought him bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening; and he drank of the brook. And it came to pass after a while, that the brook dried up, because there was no rain in the land.

And it came to pass after many days, that the word of the LORD came to Elijah, in the third year, saying, Go, shew thyself unto Ahab; and I will send rain upon the earth. And Elijah went to shew himself unto Ahab. And the famine was sore in Samaria. And Ahab called Obadiah, which was over the household. (Now Obadiah feared the LORD greatly: for it was so, when Jezebel cut off the prophets of the LORD, that Obadiah took an hundred prophets, and hid them by fifty in a cave, and fed them with bread and water.) And Ahab said unto Obadiah, Go through the land,

unto all the fountains of water, and unto all the brooks: peradventure we may find grass and save the horses and mules alive, that we lose not all the beasts. So they divided the land between them to pass throughout it: Ahab went one way by himself, and Obadiah went another way by himself. And as Obadiah was in the way, behold, Elijah met him: and he knew him, and fell on his face, and said, Is it thou, my lord Elijah? And he answered him, It is I: go, tell thy lord, Behold, Elijah is here. And he said, Wherein have I sinned, that thou wouldest deliver thy servant into the hand of Ahab, to slay me? As the LORD thy God liveth, there is no nation or kingdom, whither my lord hath not sent to seek thee: and when they said, He is not here, he took an oath of the kingdom and nation, that they found thee not. And now thou sayest, Go, tell thy lord, Behold, Elijah is here. And it shall come to pass, as soon as I am gone from thee, that the spirit of the LORD shall carry thee whither I know not; and so when I come and tell Ahab, and he cannot find thee, he shall slay me: but I thy servant fear the LORD from my youth. Was it not told my lord what I did when Jezebel slew the prophets of the LORD, how I hid an hundred men of the LORD'S prophets by fifty in a cave, and fed them with bread and water? And now thou sayest, Go, tell thy lord, Behold, Elijah is here: and he shall slay me. And Elijah said, As the LORD of hosts liveth, before whom I stand, I will surely shew myself unto him to-day. So Obadiah went to meet Ahab, and told him: and Ahab went to meet Elijah. And it came to pass, when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said unto him, Is it thou, thou troubler of Israel? And he answered, I have not troubled Israel; but thou, and thy father's house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the LORD, and thou hast followed the Baalim. Now therefore send, and gather to me all Israel unto mount Carmel, and the prophets of Baal four hundred and fifty, and the prophets of the Asherah four hundred, which eat at Jezebel's table.

So Ahab sent unto all the children of Israel, and gathered the prophets together unto mount Carmel. And Elijah came near unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word. Then said Elijah unto the people, I, even I only, am left a prophet of the LORD; but Baal's prophets are four hundred and fifty men. Let them therefore give us two bullocks; and let them choose one bullock for themselves, and cut it in pieces, and lay it on the wood, and put no fire under: and I will dress the other bullock, and lay it on the wood, and put no fire under. And call ye on the name of your god, and I will call on the name of the LORD: and the God that answereth by fire, let him be God. And all the people answered and said, It is well spoken. And Elijah said unto the prophets of Baal, Choose you one bullock for yourselves, and dress it first; for ye are many; and call on the name of your god, but

put no fire under. And they took the bullock which was given them, and they dressed it, and called on the name of Baal from morning even until noon, saying, O Baal, hear us. But there was no voice, nor any that answered. And they leaped about the altar which was made. And it came to pass at noon, that Elijah mocked them, and said, Cry aloud: for he is a god; either he is musing, or he is gone aside, or he is in a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth, and must be awaked. And they cried aloud, and cut themselves after their manner with knives and lances, till the blood gushed out upon them. And it was so, when midday was past, that they prophesied until the time of the offering of the evening oblation; but there was neither voice, nor any to answer, nor any that regarded. And Elijah said unto all the people, Come near unto me; and all the people came near unto him. And he repaired the altar of the LORD that was thrown down. And Elijah took twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, unto whom the word of the LORD came, saying, Israel shall be thy name. And with the stones he built an altar in the name of the LORD; and he made a trench about the altar, as great as would contain two measures of seed. And he put the wood in order, and cut the bullock in pieces, and laid it on the wood. And he said, Fill four barrels with water, and pour it on the burnt offering, and on the wood. And he said, Do it the second time; and they did it the second time. And he said, Do it the third time; and they did it the third time. And the water ran round about the altar; and he filled the trench also with water. And it came to pass at the time of the offering of the evening oblation, that Elijah the prophet came near, and said, O LORD, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word. Hear me, O LORD, hear me, that this people may know that thou, LORD, art God, and that thou hast turned their heart back again. Then the fire of the LORD fell, and consumed the burnt offering, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench. And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, The LORD, he is God; the LORD, he is God. And Elijah said unto them, Take the prophets of Baal; let not one of them escape. And they took them: and Elijah brought them down to the brook Kishon, and slew them there. And Elijah said unto Ahab, Get thee up, eat and drink; for there is the sound of abundance of rain. So Ahab went up to eat and to drink. And Elijah went up to the top of Carmel; and he bowed himself down upon the earth, and put his face between his knees. And he said to his servant, Go up now, look toward the sea. And he went up, and looked, and said, There is nothing. And he said, Go again seven times. And it came to pass at the seventh time, that he said, Behold, there ariseth a cloud out of the sea, as small as a man's hand. And he said, Go up,

say unto Ahab, Make ready thy chariot, and get thee down, that the rain stop thee not. And it came to pass in a little while, that the heaven grew black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain. And Ahab rode, and went to Jezreel. And the hand of the LORD was on Elijah; and he girded up his loins, and ran before Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel.

And Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, and withal how he had slain all the prophets with the sword. Then Jezebel sent a messenger unto Elijah, saying, So let the gods do to me, and more also, if I make not thy life as the life of one of them by to-morrow about this time. And when he saw that, he arose, and went for his life, and came to Beer-sheba, which belongeth to Judah, and left his servant there. But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper tree: and he requested for himself that he might die; and said, It is enough; now, O LORD, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers. And he lay down and slept under a juniper tree; and, behold, an angel touched him, and said unto him, Arise and eat. And he looked, and, behold, there was at his head a cake baken on the coals, and a cruse of water. And he did eat and drink, and laid him down again. And the angel of the LORD came again the second time, and touched him, and said, Arise and eat; because the journey is too great for thee. And he arose, and did eat and drink, and went in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights unto Horeb the mount of God. And he came thither unto a cave, and lodged there; and, behold, the word of the LORD came to him, and he said unto him, What doest thou here, Elijah? And he said, I have been very jealous for the LORD, the God of hosts; for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword: and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away. And he said, Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the LORD. And, behold, the LORD passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the LORD; but the LORD was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the LORD was not in the earthquake: and after the earthquake a fire; but the LORD was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice. And it was so, when Elijah heard it, that he wrapped his face in his mantle, and went out, and stood in the entering in of the cave. And, behold, there came a voice unto him, and said, What doest thou here, Elijah? And he said, I have been very jealous for the LORD, the God of hosts; for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away. And the LORD said unto him, Go, return on thy way to the wilderness of Damascus: and when thou comest, thou shalt anoint Hazael to be king over Syria: and Jehu the son of Nimshi shalt thou

anoint to be king over Israel: and Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abel-meholah shalt thou anoint to be prophet in thy room. And it shall come to pass, that him that escapeth from the sword of Hazael shall Jehu slay: and him that escapeth from the sword of Jehu shall Elisha slay. Yet will I leave me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him. So he departed thence, and found Elisha the son of Shaphat, who was plowing, with twelve yoke of oxen before him, and he with the twelfth: and Elijah passed over unto him, and cast his mantle upon him. And he left the oxen, and ran after Elijah, and said, Let me, I pray thee, kiss my father and my mother, and then I will follow thee. And he said unto him, Go back again; for what have I done to thee? And he returned from following him, and took the yoke of oxen, and slew them, and boiled their flesh with the instruments of the oxen, and gave unto the people, and they did eat. Then he arose, and went after Elijah, and ministered unto him. [*From* I KINGS, 17, 18, 19.]

Ahab and Naboth's Vineyard

And it came to pass after these things, that Naboth the Jezreelite had a vineyard, which was in Jezreel, hard by the palace of Ahab king of Samaria. And Ahab spake unto Naboth, saying, Give me thy vineyard, that I may have it for a garden of herbs, because it is near unto my house; and I will give thee for it a better vineyard than it: or, if it seem good to thee, I will give thee the worth of it in money. And Naboth said to Ahab, The LORD forbid it me, that I should give the inheritance of my fathers unto thee. And Ahab came into his house heavy and displeased because of the word which Naboth the Jezreelite had spoken to him: for he had said, I will not give thee the inheritance of my fathers. And he laid him down upon his bed, and turned away his face, and would eat no bread. But Jezebel his wife came to him, and said unto him, Why is thy spirit so sad, that thou eatest no bread? And he said unto her, Because I spake unto Naboth the Jezreelite, and said unto him, Give me thy vineyard for money; or else, if it please thee, I will give thee another vineyard for it: and he answered, I will not give thee my vineyard. And Jezebel his wife said unto him, Dost thou now govern the kingdom of Israel? arise, and eat bread, and let thine heart be merry: I will give thee the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite. So she wrote letters in Ahab's name, and sealed them with his seal, and sent the letters unto the elders and to the nobles that were in his city, and that dwelt with Naboth. And she wrote in the letters, saying, Proclaim a fast, and set Naboth on high among the people: and set two men, sons of Belial, before him, and let them bear witness against him, saying, Thou didst curse God and the king. And then carry him out, and stone him, that he die. And the men of his city, even the elders and the nobles who dwelt

in his city, did as Jezebel had sent unto them, according as it was written in the letters which she had sent unto them. They proclaimed a fast, and set Naboth on high among the people. And the two men, sons of Belial, came in and sat before him: and the men of Belial bare witness against him, even against Naboth, in the presence of the people, saying, Naboth did curse God and the king. Then they carried him forth out of the city, and stoned him with stones, that he died. Then they sent to Jezebel, saying, Naboth is stoned, and is dead. And it came to pass, when Jezebel heard that Naboth was stoned, and was dead, that Jezebel said to Ahab, Arise, take possession of the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, which he refused to give thee for money: for Naboth is not alive, but dead. And it came to pass, when Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, that Ahab rose up to go down to the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, to take possession of it.

And the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying, Arise, go down to meet Ahab king of Israel, which dwelleth in Samaria: behold, he is in the vineyard of Naboth, whither he is gone down to take possession of it. And thou shalt speak unto him, saying, Thus saith the LORD, Hast thou killed, and also taken possession? and thou shalt speak unto him, saying, Thus saith the LORD, In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth shall dogs lick thy blood, even thine. And Ahab said to Elijah, Hast thou found me, O mine enemy? And he answered, I have found thee: because thou hast sold thyself to do that which is evil in the sight of the LORD. Behold, I will bring evil upon thee, and will utterly sweep thee away, and will cut off from Ahab every man child, and him that is shut up and him that is left at large in Israel: and I will make thine house like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and like the house of Baasha the son of Ahijah, for the provocation wherewith thou hast provoked me to anger, and hast made Israel to sin. And of Jezebel also spake the LORD, saying, The dogs shall eat Jezebel by the rampart of Jezreel. Him that dieth of Ahab in the city the dogs shall eat; and him that dieth in the field shall the fowls of the air eat. (But there was none like unto Ahab, which did sell himself to do that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, whom Jezebel his wife stirred up. And he did very abominably in following idols, according to all that the Amorites did, whom the LORD cast out before the children of Israel.) And it came to pass, when Ahab heard those words, that he rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his flesh, and fasted, and lay in sackcloth, and went softly. And the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying, Seest thou how Ahab humbleth himself before me? because he humbleth himself before me, I will not bring the evil in his days: but in his son's days will I bring the evil upon his house.

[I KINGS, 21.]

The death of Ahab

And they continued three years without war between Syria and Israel. And it came to pass in the third year, that Jehoshaphat the king of Judah came down to the king of Israel. And the king of Israel said unto his servants, Know ye that Ramoth-gilead is ours, and we be still, and take it not out of the hand of the king of Syria? And he said unto Jehoshaphat, Wilt thou go with me to battle to Ramoth-gilead? And Jehoshaphat said to the king of Israel, I am as thou art, my people as thy people, my horses as thy horses.

So the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat the king of Judah went up to Ramoth-gilead. And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, I will disguise myself, and go into the battle; but put thou on thy robes. And the king of Israel disguised himself, and went into the battle. Now the king of Syria had commanded the thirty and two captains of his chariots, saying, Fight neither with small nor great, save only with the king of Israel. And it came to pass, when the captains of the chariots saw Jehoshaphat, that they said, Surely it is the king of Israel; and they turned aside to fight against him: and Jehoshaphat cried out. And it came to pass, when the captains of the chariots saw that it was not the king of Israel, that they turned back from pursuing him. And a certain man drew his bow at a venture, and smote the king of Israel between the joints of the harness: wherefore he said unto the driver of his chariot, Turn thine hand, and carry me out of the host; for I am sore wounded. And the battle increased that day: and the king was stayed up in his chariot against the Syrians, and died at even: and the blood ran out of the wound into the bottom of the chariot. And there went a cry throughout the host about the going down of the sun, saying, Every man to his city, and every man to his country. So the king died, and was brought to Samaria; and they buried the king in Samaria. And they washed the chariot by the pool of Samaria; and the dogs licked up his blood; (now the harlots washed themselves there;) according unto the word of the LORD which he spake.

Now the rest of the acts of Ahab, and all that he did, and the ivory house which he built, and all the cities that he built, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? So Ahab slept with his fathers; and Ahaziah his son reigned in his stead.

[*From* I KINGS, 22.]

The consecration of Elisha

And it came to pass, when the LORD would take up Elijah by a whirlwind into heaven, that Elijah went with Elisha from Gilgal. And Elijah said unto Elisha, Tarry here, I pray thee; for the LORD hath sent me as far as Beth-el. And Elisha said, As the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. So they went down to Beth-el. And the sons of the prophets that were at Beth-el came

forth to Elisha, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the LORD will take away thy master from thy head to-day? And he said, Yea, I know it; hold ye your peace. And Elijah said unto him, Elisha, tarry here, I pray thee; for the LORD hath sent me to Jericho. And he said, As the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. So they came to Jericho. And the sons of the prophets that were at Jericho came near to Elisha, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the LORD will take away thy master from thy head to-day? And he answered, Yea, I know it; hold ye your peace. And Elijah said unto him, Tarry here, I pray thee; for the LORD hath sent me to Jordan. And he said, As the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. And they two went on. And fifty men of the sons of the prophets went, and stood over against them afar off: and they two stood by Jordan. And Elijah took his mantle, and wrapped it together, and smote the waters, and they were divided hither and thither, so that they two went over on dry ground. And it came to pass, when they were gone over, that Elijah said unto Elisha, Ask what I shall do for thee, before I be taken from thee. And Elisha said, I pray thee, let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me. And he said, Thou hast asked a hard thing: nevertheless, if thou see me when I am taken from thee, it shall be so unto thee; but if not, it shall not be so. And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, which parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven. And Elisha saw it, and he cried, My father, my father, the chariots of Israel and the horsemen thereof! And he saw him no more: and he took hold of his own clothes, and rent them in two pieces. He took up also the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and went back, and stood by the bank of Jordan. And he took the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and smote the waters, and said, Where is the LORD, the God of Elijah? and when he also had smitten the waters, they were divided hither and thither: and Elisha went over. And when the sons of the prophets which were at Jericho over against him saw him, they said, The spirit of Elijah doth rest on Elisha. And they came to meet him, and bowed themselves to the ground before him.

[*From* II KINGS, 2.]

The siege of Samaria by Syria, and its providential relief

And it came to pass after this, that Ben-hadad king of Syria gathered all his host, and went up, and besieged Samaria. And there was a great famine in Samaria: and, behold, they besieged it, until an ass's head was sold for fourscore pieces of silver, and the fourth part of a kab of dove's dung for five pieces of silver. And as the king of Israel was passing by upon the wall, there cried a woman unto him, saying, Help, my lord, O king. And he said, If the LORD do not help thee, whence shall I help thee? out of the

threshing-floor, or out of the winepress? And the king said unto her, What aileth thee? And she answered, This woman said unto me, Give thy son, that we may eat him to-day, and we will eat my son to-morrow. So we boiled my son, and did eat him: and I said unto her on the next day, Give thy son, that we may eat him: and she hath hid her son. And it came to pass, when the king heard the words of the woman, that he rent his clothes; (now he was passing by upon the wall;) and the people looked, and, behold, he had sackcloth within upon his flesh. Then he said, God do so to me, and more also, if the head of Elisha the son of Shaphat shall stand on him this day. But Elisha sat in his house, and the elders sat with him; and the king sent a man from before him: but ere the messenger came to him, he said to the elders, See ye how this son of a murderer hath sent to take away mine head? look, when the messenger cometh, shut the door, and hold the door fast against him: is not the sound of his master's feet behind him? And while he yet talked with them, behold, the messenger came down unto him: and he said, Behold, this evil is of the LORD; why should I wait for the LORD any longer?

And Elisha said, Hear ye the word of the LORD: thus saith the LORD, To-morrow about this time shall a measure of fine flour be sold for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel, in the gate of Samaria. Then the captain on whose hand the king leaned answered the man of God, and said, Behold, if the LORD should make windows in heaven, might this thing be? And he said, Behold, thou shalt see it with thine eyes, but shalt not eat thereof.

Now there were four leprous men at the entering in of the gate: and they said one to another, Why sit we here until we die? If we say, We will enter into the city, then the famine is in the city, and we shall die there: and if we sit still here, we die also. Now therefore come, and let us fall unto the host of the Syrians: if they save us alive, we shall live; and if they kill us, we shall but die. And they rose up in the twilight, to go unto the camp of the Syrians: and when they were come to the outermost part of the camp of the Syrians, behold, there was no man there. For the Lord had made the host of the Syrians to hear a noise of chariots, and a noise of horses, even the noise of a great host: and they said one to another, Lo, the king of Israel hath hired against us the kings of the Hittites, and the kings of the Egyptians, to come upon us. Wherefore they arose and fled in the twilight, and left their tents, and their horses, and their asses, even the camp as it was, and fled for their life. And when these lepers came to the outermost part of the camp, they went into one tent, and did eat and drink, and carried thence silver, and gold, and raiment, and went and hid it; and they came back, and entered into another tent, and carried thence also, and went and hid it. Then they said one to another, We do not well: this day is a day of good tidings, and we hold our peace: if we tarry till the

morning light, punishment will overtake us: now therefore come, let us go and tell the king's household. So they came and called unto the porter of the city: and they told them, saying, We came to the camp of the Syrians, and, behold, there was no man there, neither voice of man, but the horses tied, and the asses tied, and the tents as they were. And he called the porters; and they told it to the king's household within. And the king arose in the night, and said unto his servants, I will now shew you what the Syrians have done to us. They know that we be hungry; therefore are they gone out of the camp to hide themselves in the field, saying, When they come out of the city, we shall take them alive, and get into the city. And one of his servants answered and said, Let some take, I pray thee, five of the horses that remain, which are left in the city, (behold, they are as all the multitude of Israel that are left in it; behold, they are as all the multitude of Israel that are consumed:) and let us send and see. They took therefore two chariots with horses; and the king sent after the host of the Syrians, saying Go and see. And they went after them unto Jordan: and lo, all the way was full of garments and vessels, which the Syrians had cast away in their haste. And the messengers returned, and told the king. And the people went out, and spoiled the camp of the Syrians. So a measure of fine flour was sold for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel, according to the word of the LORD. And the king appointed the captain on whose hand he leaned to have the charge of the gate: and the people trode upon him in the gate, and he died as the man of God had said, who spake when the king came down to him. And it came to pass, as the man of God had spoken to the king, saying, Two measures of barley for a shekel, and a measure of fine flour for a shekel, shall be to-morrow about this time in the gate of Samaria; and that captain answered the man of God, and said, Now, behold, if the LORD should make windows in heaven, might such a thing be? and he said, Behold, thou shalt see it with thine eyes, but shalt not eat thereof: it came to pass even so unto him; for the people trode upon him in the gate, and he died.

[*From* II KINGS, 6 and 7.]

3. THE DYNASTY OF JEHU (842–733 B. C.)

Jehu's usurpation

Elisha, unable to convert the king of Israel, Joram, the son of Ahab, from his Baal-worship, determined to carry out the threat already made to Ahab by Elijah and to exterminate his dynasty. For this purpose he instigated the conspiracy of Jehu.

And Elisha the prophet called one of the sons of the prophets, and said unto him, Gird up thy loins, and take this vial of oil in thine

hand, and go to Ramoth-gilead. And when thou comest thither, look out there Jehu the son of Jehoshaphat the son of Nimshi, and go in, and make him arise up from among his brethren, and carry him to an inner chamber. Then take the vial of oil, and pour it on his head, and say, Thus saith the LORD, I have anointed thee king over Israel. Then open the door, and flee, and tarry not. So the young man, even the young man the prophet, went to Ramoth-gilead. And when he came, behold, the captains of the host were sitting; and he said, I have an errand to thee, O captain. And Jehu said, Unto which of all us? And he said, To thee, O captain. And he arose, and went into the house; and he poured the oil on his head, and said unto him, Thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel, I have anointed thee king over the people of the LORD, even over Israel. And thou shalt smite the house of Ahab thy master, that I may avenge the blood of my servants the prophets, and the blood of all the servants of the LORD, at the hand of Jezebel. For the whole house of Ahab shall perish: and I will cut off from Ahab every man child, and him that is shut up and him that is left at large in Israel. And I will make the house of Ahab like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and like the house of Baasha the son of Ahijah. And the dogs shall eat Jezebel in the portion of Jezreel, and there shall be none to bury her. And he opened the door, and fled. Then Jehu came forth to the servants of his lord: and one said unto him, Is all well? wherefore came this mad fellow to thee? And he said unto them, Ye know the man and what his talk was. And they said, It is false; tell us now. And he said, Thus and thus spake he to me, saying, Thus saith the LORD, I have anointed thee king over Israel. Then they hasted, and took every man his garment, and put it under him on the top of the stairs, and blew the trumpet, saying, Jehu is king.

So Jehu the son of Jehoshaphat the son of Nimshi conspired against Joram. (Now Joram kept Ramoth-gilead, he and all Israel, because of Hazael king of Syria: but king Joram was returned to be healed in Jezreel of the wounds which the Syrians had given him, when he fought with Hazael king of Syria.) And Jehu said, If this be your mind, then let none escape and go forth out of the city, to go to tell it in Jezreel. So Jehu rode in a chariot, and went to Jezreel; for Joram lay there. And Ahaziah king of Judah was come down to see Joram. Now the watchman stood on the tower in Jezreel, and he spied the company of Jehu as he came, and said, I see a company. And Joram said, Take an horseman, and send to meet them, and let him say, Is it peace? So there went one on horseback to meet him, and said, Thus saith the king, Is it peace? And Jehu said, What hast thou to do with peace? turn thee behind me. And the watchman told, saying, The messenger came to them, but he cometh not again. Then he sent out a second on horseback, which came to them, and said, Thus saith the king, Is it peace? And Jehu answered, What

hast thou to do with peace? turn thee behind me. And the watchman told, saying, He came even unto them, and cometh not again: and the driving is like the driving of Jehu the son of Nimshi; for he driveth furiously. And Joram said, Make ready. And they made ready his chariot. And Joram king of Israel and Ahaziah king of Judah went out, each in his chariot, and they went out to meet Jehu, and found him in the portion of Naboth the Jezreelite. And it came to pass, when Joram saw Jehu, that he said, Is it peace, Jehu? And he answered, What peace, so long as the whoredoms of thy mother Jezebel and her witchcrafts are so many? And Joram turned his hands, and fled, and said to Ahaziah, There is treachery, O Ahaziah. And Jehu drew his bow with his full strength, and smote Joram between his arms, and the arrow went out at his heart, and he sunk down in his chariot. Then said Jehu to Bidkar his captain, Take up, and cast him in the portion of the field of Naboth the Jezreelite: for remember how that, when I and thou rode together after Ahab his father, the LORD laid this burden upon him; Surely I have seen yesterday the blood of Naboth, and the blood of his sons, saith the LORD; and I will requite thee in this plat, saith the LORD. Now therefore take and cast him into the plat of ground, according to the word of the LORD. But when Ahaziah the king of Judah saw this, he fled by the way of the garden house. And Jehu followed after him, and said, Smite him also in the chariot: and they smote him at the ascent of Gur, which is by Ibleam. And he fled to Megiddo, and died there. And his servants carried him in a chariot to Jerusalem, and buried him in his sepulchre with his fathers in the city of David.

And when Jehu was come to Jezreel, Jezebel heard of it; and she painted her eyes, and tired her head, and looked out at the window. And as Jehu entered in at the gate, she said, Is it peace, thou Zimri, thy master's murderer? And he lifted up his face to the window, and said, Who is on my side? who? And there looked out to him two or three eunuchs. And he said, Throw her down. So they threw her down: and some of her blood was sprinkled on the wall, and on the horses: and he trode her under foot. And when he was come in, he did eat and drink; and he said, See now to this cursed woman, and bury her: for she is a king's daughter. And they went to bury her: but they found no more of her than the skull, and the feet, and the palms of her hands. Wherefore they came again, and told him. And he said, This is the word of the LORD, which he spake by his servant Elijah the Tishbite, saying, In the portion of Jezreel shall the dogs eat the flesh of Jezebel: and the carcase of Jezebel shall be as dung upon the face of the field in the portion of Jezreel; so that they shall not say, This is Jezebel. [*From* II KINGS, 9.]

Jehu then extirpated the whole house of Ahab, and destroyed the priests of Baal. For the next century his dynasty ruled over Israel. The Assyrians during this period had not yet begun to cause acute trouble to Israel. The more pressing trouble came from Syria, whose kings Hazael and Ben-hadad began to harry Israel and 'made them like the dust in the threshing'. The third king of the dynasty, however, Jeroboam II (781–740), restored the borders of Israel, took Damascus, and put his country into a position of great prosperity and power.

The warnings of Amos (*c.* 760–745 B. C.)

This splendour led to self-indulgence and luxury, the perversion of justice, the oppression of the poor and the destruction of the morale of the people. At this critical stage in the nation's history, Amos the prophet, the herdman of Tekoa, came from Judah to warn Israel of the inevitable results of their wickedness and folly.

Nothing happens by chance; the prophet's warning is from God

Shall two walk together, except they have agreed?
Will a lion roar in the forest, when he hath no prey?
Will a young lion cry out of his den, if he have taken nothing?
Can a bird fall in a snare upon the earth, where no gin is set for him?
Shall a snare spring up from the ground, and have taken nothing at all?
Shall the trumpet be blown in a city, and the people not be afraid?
Shall evil befall a city, and the LORD hath not done it?
Surely the Lord GOD will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets.
The lion hath roared, who will not fear?
The Lord GOD hath spoken, who can but prophesy?

[*From* AMOS, 3.]

The wickedness of the people

They have sold the righteous for silver, and the needy for a pair of shoes:
That pant after the dust of the earth on the head of the poor, and turn aside the way of the meek:
And a man and his father will go unto the same maid, to profane my holy name:
And they lay themselves down beside every altar upon clothes taken in pledge,
And in the house of their God they drink the wine of such as have been fined.

Ye gave the Nazirites wine to drink;
And commanded the prophets, saying, Prophesy not.

They hate him that reproveth in the gate, and they abhor him that speaketh uprightly.
Forasmuch therefore as ye trample upon the poor, and take exactions from him of wheat:
Ye have built houses of hewn stone, but ye shall not dwell in them:
Ye have planted pleasant vineyards, but ye shall not drink the wine thereof.
For I know how manifold are your transgressions and how mighty are your sins;
Ye that afflict the just, that take a bribe, and that turn aside the needy in the gate from their right.

Ye that put far away the evil day, and cause the seat of violence to come near;
That lie upon beds of ivory, and stretch themselves upon their couches,
And eat the lambs out of the flock, and the calves out of the midst of the stall;
That sing idle songs to the sound of the viol; that devise for themselves instruments of music, like David;
That drink wine in bowls, and anoint themselves with the chief ointments;
But they are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph.

Hear this, O ye that would swallow up the needy, and cause the poor of the land to fail,
Saying, When will the new moon be gone, that we may sell corn? and the sabbath, that we may set forth wheat?
Making the ephah small, and the shekel great, and dealing falsely with balances of deceit;
That we may buy the poor for silver, and the needy for a pair of shoes, and sell the refuse of the wheat. [*From* AMOS, 2, 5, 6, and 8.]

Their punishment

Behold, I will press you in your place,
As a cart presseth that is full of sheaves.
And flight shall perish from the swift,
And the strong shall not strengthen his force,
Neither shall the mighty deliver himself:
Neither shall he stand that handleth the bow;
And he that is swift of foot shall not deliver himself:
Neither shall he that rideth the horse deliver himself:
And he that is courageous among the mighty shall flee away naked in that day,
saith the LORD.

For in the day that I shall visit the transgressions of Israel upon him,

I will also visit the altars of Beth-el,
And the horns of the altar shall be cut off, and fall to the ground.
And I will smite the winter house with the summer house;
And the houses of ivory shall perish,
And the great houses shall have an end,
saith the LORD.

Hear this word, ye kine of Bashan,[1] that are in the mountain of Samaria,
Which oppress the poor, which crush the needy,
Which say unto their lords, Bring, and let us drink.
The Lord GOD hath sworn by his holiness,
That, lo, the days shall come upon you,
That they shall take you away with hooks,
And your residue with fish hooks.
And ye shall go out at the breaches, every one straight before her;
And ye shall cast yourselves into Harmon,
saith the LORD.

Wailing shall be in all the broad ways;
And they shall say in all the streets, Alas! alas!
And they shall call the husbandman to mourning,
And such as are skilful of lamentation to wailing.
And in all vineyards shall be wailing:
For I will pass through the midst of thee,
saith the LORD.

Woe unto you that desire the day of the LORD!
Wherefore would ye have the day of the LORD?
It is darkness, and not light.
As if a man did flee from a lion, and a bear met him;
Or went into the house and leaned his hand on the wall, and a serpent bit him.
Shall not the day of the LORD be darkness, and not light?
Even very dark, and no brightness in it?

The end is come upon my people Israel;
I will not again pass by them any more.
And the songs of the temple shall be howlings in that day,
Saith the Lord GOD:
The dead bodies shall be many;
In every place shall they cast them forth with silence.

Thy wife shall be an harlot in the city,
And thy sons and thy daughters shall fall by the sword,
And thy land shall be divided by line;
And thou thyself shalt die in a land that is unclean,
And Israel shall surely be led away captive out of his land.

[*From* AMOS, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8.]

[1] i.e., the ladies of Israel.

4. Anarchy leading to final destruction (*c.* 733–722 B.C.)

Years of misrule under military usurpers

The prophet's warnings were in vain. At the death of Jeroboam, his son reigned for six months and was murdered by Shallum. The dynasty of Jehu was at an end, and the nation for the remaining years of its existence was ruled by usurpers who each in turn murdered his predecessor. The nation sank to even lower depths of wickedness and degradation, and received from Hosea a further warning of the abyss into which they were falling.

Hear the word of the Lord, ye children of Israel:
For the Lord hath a controversy with the inhabitants of the land,
Because there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land.
There is nought but swearing and breaking faith,
And killing, and stealing, and committing adultery;
They break out, and blood toucheth blood.
Therefore shall the land mourn,
And every one that dwelleth therein shall languish,
With the beasts of the field and the fowls of heaven;
Yea, the fishes of the sea also shall be taken away.

O Ephraim, what shall I do unto thee?
O Judah, what shall I do unto thee?
For your goodness is as a morning cloud,
And as the dew that goeth early away.
Therefore have I hewed them by the prophets;
I have slain them by the words of my mouth:
And thy judgements are as the light that goeth forth.
For I desire mercy, and not sacrifice;
And the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings.

But they like Adam have transgressed the covenant:
There have they dealt treacherously against me.
Gilead is a city of them that work iniquity,
It is stained with blood.
And as troops of robbers wait for a man,
So the company of priests murder in the way toward Shechem:
Yea, they have committed lewdness.
In the house of Israel I have seen an horrible thing:
There whoredom is found in Ephraim,
Israel is defiled.
Also, O Judah, there is an harvest appointed for thee,
When I bring again the captivity of my people.

When I would heal Israel,
Then is the iniquity of Ephraim discovered,

And the wickedness of Samaria;
For they commit falsehood:
And the thief entereth in,
And the troop of robbers spoileth without.
And they consider not in their hearts that I remember all their wickedness:
Now have their own doings beset them about;
They are before my face.
They make the king glad with their wickedness,
And the princes with their lies.
They are all adulterers;
They are as an oven heated by the baker;
He ceaseth to stir the fire,
From the kneading of the dough until it be leavened.
On the day of our king the princes made themselves sick with the heat of wine;
He stretched out his hand with scorners.
For they have made ready their heart like an oven, whiles they lie in wait:
Their baker sleepeth all the night;
In the morning it burneth as a flaming fire.
They are all hot as an oven,
And devour their judges;
All their kings are fallen:
There is none among them that calleth unto me.

They sow the wind,
And they shall reap the whirlwind:
He hath no standing corn;
The blade shall yield no meal;
If so be it yield, strangers shall swallow it up.
Israel is swallowed up:
Now are they among the nations as a vessel wherein is no pleasure.

The threshing-floor and the wine-press shall not feed them,
And the new wine shall fail her.
They shall not dwell in the LORD'S land;
But Ephraim shall return to Egypt,
And they shall eat unclean food in Assyria.

Their pleasant things of silver,
Nettles shall possess them:
Thorns shall be in their tents.
The days of visitation are come,
The days of recompence are come;
Israel shall know it.

Ye have plowed wickedness,
Ye have reaped iniquity;
Ye have eaten the fruit of lies:
For thou didst trust in thy way,
In the multitude of thy mighty men.
Therefore shall a tumult arise among thy people,
And all thy fortresses shall be spoiled,
As Shalman spoiled Beth-arbel in the day of battle:
The mother was dashed in pieces with her children.
So shall Beth-el do unto you because of your great wickedness:
At daybreak shall the king of Israel be utterly cut off.

[*From* HOSEA, 4, 6, 8, 9, and 10.]

Isaiah also at the beginning (*c.* 740 B.C.) *of his mission to the kingdom of Judah utters a warning to the Northern kingdom.*

The Lord sent a word unto Jacob,
And it hath lighted upon Israel.
And all the people shall know,
Even Ephraim and the inhabitant of Samaria,
That say in pride and in stoutness of heart,
The bricks are fallen,
But we will build with hewn stone:
The sycomores are cut down,
But we will change them into cedars.
Therefore the LORD shall set up on high against him the adversaries of Rezin,
And shall stir up his enemies;
The Syrians before, and the Philistines behind;
And they shall devour Israel with open mouth.
For all this his anger is not turned away,
But his hand is stretched out still.

Yet the people hath not turned unto him that smote them,
Neither have they sought the LORD of hosts.
Therefore the LORD will cut off from Israel
Head and tail, palm-branch and rush, in one day.
The ancient and the honourable man, he is the head;
And the prophet that teacheth lies, he is the tail.
For they that lead this people cause them to err;
And they that are led of them are destroyed.
Therefore the Lord shall not rejoice over their young men,
Neither shall he have compassion on their fatherless and widows:
For every one is profane and an evil-doer,
And every mouth speaketh folly.
For all this his anger is not turned away,
But his hand is stretched out still.

For wickedness burneth as the fire;
It devoureth the briers and thorns:
Yea, it kindleth in the thickets of the forest,
And they roll upward in thick clouds of smoke.
Through the wrath of the LORD of hosts is the land burnt up:
The people also are as the fuel of fire;
No man spareth his brother.
And one shall snatch on the right hand, and be hungry;
And he shall eat on the left hand, and they shall not be satisfied:
They shall eat every man the flesh of his own arm:
Manasseh, Ephraim; and Ephraim, Manasseh:
And they together shall be against Judah.
For all this his anger is not turned away,
But his hand is stretched out still. [*From* ISAIAH, 9.]

The aggressions of the Assyrians and their destruction of the Northern Kingdom (722 B. C.)[1]

The nation, however, was too demoralized to recover. The various usurpers endeavoured by giving presents to the king of Assyria to enlist his support for their position. But Assyria was not to be bought off permanently in this way. In the days of Pekah, king of Israel, Tiglath-Pileser, king of Assyria, invaded the kingdom, took many towns, and carried off their population captive to Assyria. Shortly afterwards, the new king Hoshea made an alliance with Rezin, king of Syria, and attacked Jerusalem with the object of compelling Judah to join Israel and Syria against Assyria. Ahaz, however, king of Judah, preferred to appeal to Assyria for help, and the king of Assyria listened to the appeal, attacked and captured Damascus and killed Rezin. By this time the position of the kingdom of Israel had become hopeless. Hoshea tried to shake off Assyria by enlisting the help of the king of Egypt, and Shalmaneser, king of Assyria, to punish his conspiracy besieged Samaria for three years. Sargon, his successor, finally took it, and the chief inhabitants of the Northern Kingdom were taken away captive to Assyria and scattered into widely distant towns so as to complete their dispersion. Sargon placed in the cities of Samaria men from Babylon and other towns of the East. Henceforward the Ten Tribes of Israel are unknown to history.

N. B. *The poorer Israelites who were not carried away into captivity coalesced with the Assyrian immigrants and formed the group known in the New Testament as the Samaritans. The impure worship which they established among themselves estranged them permanently from the Jews of Judah.*

[1] For the position of Assyria and a list of her kings, see Note C at the end of this volume.

V

THE KINGDOM OF JUDAH (*c.* 933–586 B. C.)

1. STRUGGLES WITH EGYPT, SYRIA, AND ISRAEL

THE kingdom of Judah, which of course began its separate existence at the same time as the kingdom of Israel, outlasted it by some 130 *years. For nearly* 350 *years it retained its separate national existence, preserving throughout the entire period an unbroken line of kings of the house of David. It passed early, however, through troublesome times. In the year of its first king, Rehoboam, the country was raided by Shishak, king of Egypt, who plundered it of all the stored wealth of Solomon. For the next* 200 *years the nation lived in more or less constant war with Israel and Syria, and only in the reign of Uzziah did it really become strong and prosperous. Good fortune, however, led to demoralization in Judah as in Israel, and provoked the denunciations of Isaiah who began his prophetic mission about the time of Uzziah's death* (740 B. C.).

2. THE SHADOW OF ASSYRIA AND THE WARNINGS OF ISAIAH AND MICAH

Before Assyria actually invaded Palestine, Isaiah foresaw the danger that a rich but corrupt society was running, and endeavoured to warn his countrymen of the fate that seemed likely to overtake them. His contemporary Micah dealt with the same topics.

Isaiah's Call

In the year that king Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above him stood the seraphim: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory. And the foundations of the thresholds were moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke.

Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts. Then flew one of the seraphim unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar: and he touched my mouth with it, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged.

And I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then I said, Here am I; send me. And he said, Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat,

and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and turn again, and be healed.

Then said I, Lord, how long? And he answered, Until cities be waste without inhabitant, and houses without man, and the land become utterly waste, and the LORD have removed men far away, and the forsaken places be many in the midst of the land. And if there be yet a tenth in it, it shall again be eaten up: as a terebinth, and as an oak, whose stock remaineth, when they are felled; so the holy seed is the stock thereof. [*From* ISAIAH, 6.]

The sins of the people

Let me sing for my wellbeloved a song of my beloved touching his vineyard.
My wellbeloved had a vineyard in a very fruitful hill:
And he made a trench about it,
And gathered out the stones thereof,
And planted it with the choicest vine,
And built a tower in the midst of it,
And also hewed out a winepress therein:
And he looked that it should bring forth grapes,
And it brought forth wild grapes.

And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem and men of Judah, judge, I pray you, betwixt me and my vineyard. What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it? wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes? And now go to; I will tell you what I will do my vineyard:
I will take away the hedge thereof,
And it shall be eaten up;
I will break down the fence thereof,
And it shall be trodden down:
And I will lay it waste;
It shall not be pruned nor hoed;
But there shall come up briers and thorns:
I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it.
For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts is the house of Israel,
And the men of Judah his pleasant plant:
And he looked for judgement, but behold oppression;
For righteousness, but behold a cry.

Woe unto them that join house to house, that lay field to field,
Till there be no room, and ye be made to dwell alone in the midst of the land!
In mine ears saith the LORD of hosts,
Of a truth many houses shall be desolate, even great and fair, without inhabitant.

For ten acres of vineyard shall yield one bath,
And a homer of seed shall yield but an ephah.

Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning, that they may follow strong drink;
That tarry late into the night, till wine inflame them!
And the harp and the lute, the tabret and the pipe, and wine, are in their feasts:
But they regard not the work of the LORD,
Neither have they considered the operation of his hands.
Therefore my people are gone into captivity, for lack of knowledge:
And their honourable men are famished,
And their multitude are parched with thirst.
Therefore hell hath enlarged her desire, and opened her mouth without measure:
And their glory, and their multitude, and their pomp, and he that rejoiceth among them, descend into it.
And the mean man is bowed down,
And the great man is humbled, and the eyes of the lofty are humbled:
But the LORD of hosts is exalted in judgement,
And God the Holy One is sanctified in righteousness.
Then shall the lambs feed as in their pasture,
And the waste places of the fat ones shall wanderers eat.

Woe unto them that draw iniquity with cords of vanity,
And sin as it were with a cart rope:
That say, Let him make speed, let him hasten his work, that we may see it:
And let the counsel of the Holy One of Israel draw nigh and come, that we may know it!

Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil;
That put darkness for light, and light for darkness;
That put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!

Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes,
And prudent in their own sight!

Woe unto them that are mighty to drink wine,
And men of strength to mingle strong drink:
Which justify the wicked for a reward,
And take away the righteousness of the righteous from him!

Woe unto them that decree unrighteous decrees,
And to the writers that write perverseness:
To turn aside the needy from judgement,
And to take away the right of the poor of my people,
That widows may be their spoil,

And that they may make the fatherless their prey!
And what will ye do in the day of visitation,
And in the desolation which shall come from far?
To whom will ye flee for help?
And where will ye leave your glory?
They shall only bow down under the prisoners,
And shall fall under the slain. [*From* ISAIAH, 5 and 10.]

The threatened punishment of the people

Therefore is the anger of the LORD kindled against his people, and he hath stretched forth his hand against them, and hath smitten them, and the hills did tremble, and their carcases were as refuse in the midst of the streets.

Enter into the rock,
And hide thee in the dust,
From before the terror of the LORD,
And from the glory of his majesty.
The lofty looks of man shall be brought low,
And the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down,
And the LORD alone shall be exalted in that day.

For there shall be a day of the LORD of hosts
Upon all that is proud and haughty,
And upon all that is lifted up;
And it shall be brought low:
And upon all the cedars of Lebanon,
That are high and lifted up,
And upon all the oaks of Bashan;
And upon all the high mountains,
And upon all the hills that are lifted up;
And upon every lofty tower,
And upon every fenced wall;
And upon all the ships of Tarshish,
And upon all pleasant imagery.
And the loftiness of man shall be bowed down,
And the haughtiness of men shall be brought low:
And the LORD alone shall be exalted in that day.
And the idols shall utterly pass away.

And men shall go into the caves of the rocks,
And into the holes of the earth,
From before the terror of the LORD,
And from the glory of his majesty,
When he ariseth to shake mightily the earth.

In that day a man shall cast away his idols of silver, and his idols of gold,
Which they made for him to worship,
To the moles and to the bats;
To go into the caverns of the rocks,
And into the clefts of the ragged rocks,
From before the terror of the LORD,
And from the glory of his majesty,
When he ariseth to shake mightily the earth.

And [the Lord] will lift up an ensign to the nations from far,
And will hiss for them from the end of the earth:
And, behold, they shall come with speed swiftly:
None shall be weary nor stumble among them;
None shall slumber nor sleep;
Neither shall the girdle of their loins be loosed,
Nor the latchet of their shoes be broken:
Whose arrows are sharp,
And all their bows bent;
Their horses' hoofs shall be counted like flint,
And their wheels like a whirlwind:
Their roaring shall be like a lion,
They shall roar like young lions:
Yea, they shall roar, and lay hold of the prey,
And carry it away safe,
And there shall be none to deliver.
And they shall roar against them in that day like the roaring of the sea:
And if one look unto the land,
Behold darkness and distress,
And the light is darkened in the clouds thereof.

[*From* ISAIAH, 2 and 5.]

The future glory of Jerusalem when her sins have been purged

But in the latter days it shall come to pass,
That the mountain of the LORD's house shall be established in the top of the mountains,
And it shall be exalted above the hills;
And peoples shall flow unto it.
And many nations shall go and say,
Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD,
And to the house of the God of Jacob;
And he will teach us of his ways,
And we will walk in his paths:
For out of Zion shall go forth the law,
And the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

And he shall judge between many peoples,
And shall reprove strong nations afar off;
And they shall beat their swords into plowshares,
And their spears into pruninghooks:
Nation shall not lift up sword against nation,
Neither shall they learn war any more.
But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree;
And none shall make them afraid:
For the mouth of the LORD of hosts hath spoken it.
For all the peoples will walk every one in the name of his gŏd,
And we will walk in the name of the LORD our God for ever and ever.

In that day, saith the LORD,
Will I assemble her that halteth,
And I will gather her that is driven away,
And her that I have afflicted;
And I will make her that halted a remnant,
And her that was cast far off a strong nation:
And the LORD shall reign over them in mount Zion from henceforth even for ever.
And thou, O tower of the flock,
The hill of the daughter of Zion,
Unto thee shall it come;
Yea, the former dominion shall come,
The kingdom of the daughter of Jerusalem.

[MICAH, 4. 1–8.]

In that day shall the branch of the LORD be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the land shall be excellent and comely for them that are escaped of Israel. And it shall come to pass, that he that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, even every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem: when the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof, by the spirit of judgement, and by the spirit of burning. And the LORD will create over the whole habitation of mount Zion, and over her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night: for over all the glory shall be spread a canopy. And there shall be a pavilion for a shadow in the day-time from the heat, and for a refuge and for a covert from storm and from rain. [ISAIAH, 4. 2–6.]

This however was a glimpse of the future. At the moment king Ahaz was attacked by the kings of Israel and Syria who came up against Jerusalem to force Ahaz into a confederation against Assyria. Isaiah urged the king not to fear them, and offered a sign in support of his advice.

Then said the LORD unto Isaiah, Go forth now to meet Ahaz, thou, and Shear-jashub thy son, at the end of the conduit of the upper pool, in the high way of the fuller's field; and say unto him, Take heed, and be quiet; fear not, neither let thine heart be faint, because of these two tails of smoking firebrands, for the fierce anger of Rezin and Syria, and of the son of Remaliah. Because Syria hath counselled evil against thee, Ephraim also, and the son of Remaliah, saying, Let us go up against Judah, and vex it, and let us make a breach therein for us, and set up a king in the midst of it, even the son of Tabeel: thus saith the Lord GOD, It shall not stand, neither shall it come to pass. For the head of Syria is Damascus, and the head of Damascus is Rezin: and within threescore and five years shall Ephraim be broken in pieces, that it be not a people: and the head of Ephraim is Samaria, and the head of Samaria is Remaliah's son. If ye will not believe, surely ye shall not be established.

And the LORD spake again unto Ahaz, saying, Ask thee a sign of the LORD thy God; ask it either in the depth, or in the height above. But Ahaz said, I will not ask, neither will I tempt the LORD. And he said, Hear ye now, O house of David; is it a small thing for you to weary men, that ye will weary my God also? Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. Butter and honey shall he eat, when he knoweth to refuse the evil, and choose the good. For before the child shall know to refuse the evil, and choose the good, the land whose two kings thou abhorrest shall be forsaken.

[ISAIAH, 7. 4–16.]

Ahaz, however, rejected Isaiah's advice and preferred to seek help direct from Assyria. For the moment, his policy succeeded as Assyria overthrew Syria and shortly afterwards Israel. Isaiah, however, foresaw that in the long run Assyria would turn on Judah, and warned Ahaz of this danger.

The LORD shall bring upon thee, and upon thy people, and upon thy father's house, days that have not come, from the day that Ephraim departed from Judah; even the king of Assyria.

And it shall come to pass in that day, that the LORD shall hiss for the fly that is in the uttermost part of the rivers of Egypt, and for the bee that is in the land of Assyria. And they shall come, and shall rest all of them in the desolate valleys, and in the holes of the rocks, and upon all thorns, and upon all pastures.

In that day shall the Lord shave with a razor that is hired, which is in the parts beyond the River, even with the king of Assyria, the head and the hair of the feet: and it shall also consume the beard.

And it shall come to pass in that day, that a man shall nourish a young cow, and two sheep; and it shall come to pass, for the abundance of milk that they shall give he shall eat butter: for butter and honey shall every one eat that is left in the midst of the land.

And it shall come to pass in that day, that every place, where there were a thousand vines at a thousand silverlings, shall even be for briers and thorns. With arrows and with bow shall one come thither; because all the land shall be briers and thorns. And all the hills that were digged with the mattock, thou shalt not come thither for fear of briers and thorns, but it shall be for the sending forth of oxen, and for the treading of sheep. [ISAIAH, 7. 17–end.]

In spite, however, of these tribulations, a glorious future is in store for the country.

But there shall be no gloom to her that was in anguish. In the former time he brought into contempt the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the latter time hath he made it glorious, by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the nations.

The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.

Thou hast multiplied the nation, thou hast increased their joy: they joy before thee according to the joy in harvest, as men rejoice when they divide the spoil.

For the yoke of his burden, and the staff of his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, thou hast broken as in the day of Midian.

For all the armour of the armed man in the tumult, and the garments rolled in blood, shall even be for burning, for fuel of fire.

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Of the increase of his government and of peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to establish it, and to uphold it with judgement and with righteousness from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts shall perform this. [ISAIAH, 9. 1–7.]

The enemies of Zion shall perish, and the King of Peace shall come to her.

The burden of the word of the LORD upon the land of Hadrach, and Damascus shall be its resting place: for the eye of man and of all the tribes of Israel is toward the LORD:

And Hamath also which bordereth thereon: Tyre and Zidon, because she is very wise.

And Tyre did build herself a strong hold, and heaped up silver as the dust, and fine gold as the mire of the streets.

Behold, the Lord will dispossess her, and he will smite her power in the sea; and she shall be devoured with fire.

Ashkelon shall see it, and fear; Gaza also, and shall be sore

pained; and Ekron, for her expectation shall be ashamed: and the king shall perish from Gaza, and Ashkelon shall not be inhabited.

And a bastard shall dwell in Ashdod, and I will cut off the pride of the Philistines.

And I will take away his blood out of his mouth, and his abominations from between his teeth; and he also shall be a remnant for our God: and he shall be as a chieftain in Judah, and Ekron as a Jebusite.

And I will encamp about mine house against the army, that none pass through or return: and no oppressor shall pass through them any more: for now have I seen with mine eyes.

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy king cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, even upon a colt the foal of an ass.

And I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim, and the horse from Jerusalem, and the battle bow shall be cut off; and he shall speak peace unto the nations: and his dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth.

[ZECHARIAH, 9. 1–10.[1]]

3. THE ASSYRIANS DESTROY PHILISTIA (710 B.C.) AND BABYLON (709 B.C.)

Between the Assyrians' destruction of Samaria (722 B.C.) *and their assault on Jerusalem under Sennacherib, they do not appear to have troubled Judah unduly. They were, however, busy with Judah's neighbours. In* 710 *Sargon, king of Assyria, attacked Ashdod and conquered Philistia, and in the following year he captured Babylon, then ruled by Merodach-Baladan. Babylon at that time was friendly to Judah, and Isaiah regarded the siege and fall of Babylon with dismay. He thus describes it:*

The burden of the wilderness of the sea.
As whirlwinds in the South sweep through,
It cometh from the wilderness, from a terrible land.
A grievous vision is declared unto me;
The treacherous dealer dealeth treacherously,
And the spoiler spoileth.
Go up, O Elam; besiege, O Media;
All the sighing thereof have I made to cease.
Therefore are my loins filled with anguish;
Pangs have taken hold upon me,
As the pangs of a woman in travail:
I am pained so that I cannot hear;

[1] The date of this prophecy is very doubtful. Zechariah was a contemporary of Haggai and wrote about 520 B.C. I have followed the view that the extract given above dates from a much earlier period and was not, therefore, the work of Zechariah himself.

I am dismayed so that I cannot see.
My heart panteth,
Horror hath affrighted me:
The twilight that I desired hath been turned into trembling unto me.

They prepare the table,
They set the watch,
They eat, they drink:
Rise up, ye princes, anoint the shield.[1]

For thus hath the Lord said unto me,
Go, set a watchman;
Let him declare what he seeth:
And when he seeth a troop,
Horsemen in pairs,
A troop of asses,
A troop of camels,
He shall hearken diligently with much heed.

And he cried as a lion:
O Lord, I stand continually upon the watch-tower in the day-time,
And am set in my ward whole nights:
And, behold, here cometh a troop of men,
Horsemen in pairs.
And he answered and said,
Babylon is fallen, is fallen;
And all the graven images of her gods are broken unto the ground.
[ISAIAH, 21. 1–9.]

4. THE ASSYRIANS' FIRST ATTACK ON JERUSALEM UNDER HEZEKIAH (*c.* 705–701 B.C.)

In 705 B.C. *Sargon was succeeded as king of Assyria by Sennacherib who in the course of a campaign against the Phoenician and Philistine cities invaded the kingdom of Judah and besieged Hezekiah in Jerusalem.*

Now in the fourteenth year of king Hezekiah did Sennacherib king of Assyria come up against all the fenced cities of Judah, and took them. And Hezekiah king of Judah sent to the king of Assyria to Lachish, saying, I have offended; return from me: that which thou puttest on me will I bear. And the king of Assyria appointed unto Hezekiah king of Judah three hundred talents of silver and thirty talents of gold. And Hezekiah gave him all the silver that was found in the house of the LORD, and in the treasures of the king's house. At that time did Hezekiah cut off the gold from the doors of the temple of the LORD, and from the pillars which

[1] i.e., the Babylonian princes are suddenly summoned to arm themselves during their feasting.

Hezekiah king of Judah had overlaid, and gave it to the king of Assyria.

Hezekiah, however, subsequently tried to throw off his allegiance to Assyria by asking Egypt for help. Isaiah thus denounced his folly.

Woe to the rebellious children, saith the LORD, that take counsel, but not of me; and that cover with a covering, but not of my spirit, that they may add sin to sin: that walk to go down into Egypt, and have not asked at my mouth; to strengthen themselves in the strength of Pharaoh, and to trust in the shadow of Egypt! Therefore shall the strength of Pharaoh be your shame, and the trust in the shadow of Egypt your confusion. For his princes are at Zoan, and his ambassadors are come to Hanes. They shall all be ashamed of a people that cannot profit them, that are not an help nor profit, but a shame, and also a reproach.

The burden of the beasts of the South.
Through the land of trouble and anguish,
From whence come the lioness and the lion,
The viper and fiery flying serpent,
They carry their riches upon the shoulders of young asses,
And their treasures upon the bunches of camels,
To a people that shall not profit them.
For Egypt helpeth in vain, and to no purpose:
Therefore have I called her Rahab that sitteth still.

Woe to them that go down to Egypt for help, and stay on horses; and trust in chariots, because they are many, and in horsemen, because they are very strong; but they look not unto the Holy One of Israel, neither seek the LORD! Yet he also is wise, and will bring evil, and will not call back his words: but will arise against the house of the evil-doers, and against the help of them that work iniquity. Now the Egyptians are men, and not God; and their horses flesh, and not spirit: and when the LORD shall stretch out his hand, both he that helpeth shall stumble, and he that is holpen shall fall, and they all shall fail together.

For thus said the Lord GOD, the Holy One of Israel, In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength: and ye would not. But ye said, No, for we will flee upon horses; therefore shall ye flee: and, We will ride upon the swift; therefore shall they that pursue you be swift. One thousand shall flee at the rebuke of one: at the rebuke of five shall ye flee: till ye be left as a beacon upon the top of a mountain, and as an ensign on an hill. [*From* ISAIAH, 30 and 31.]

Sennacherib, incensed with Hezekiah's action, sends a great army against Jerusalem under the Rabshakeh.

The advance of the Assyrian

He is come to Aiath,
He is passed through Migron;
At Michmash he layeth up his baggage:
They are gone over the pass;
They have taken up their lodging at Geba:
Ramah trembleth;
Gibeah of Saul is fled.

Cry aloud with thy voice, O daughter of Gallim!
Hearken, O Laishah!
O thou poor Anathoth!
Madmenah is a fugitive;
The inhabitants of Gebim gather themselves to flee.
This very day shall he halt at Nob:
He shaketh his hand at the mount of the daughter of Zion, the hill of Jerusalem. [*From* ISAIAH, 10.]

The Assyrian army before Jerusalem

And [the Assyrians] went up and came to Jerusalem. And when they were come up, they came and stood by the conduit of the upper pool, which is in the high way of the fuller's field. And when they had called to the king, there came out to them Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, which was over the household, and Shebnah the scribe, and Joah the son of Asaph the recorder. And Rabshakeh said unto them, Say ye now to Hezekiah, Thus saith the great king, the king of Assyria, What confidence is this wherein thou trustest? Thou sayest, but they are but vain words, There is counsel and strength for the war. Now on whom dost thou trust, that thou hast rebelled against me? Now, behold, thou trustest upon the staff of this bruised reed, even upon Egypt; whereon if a man lean, it will go into his hand, and pierce it: so is Pharaoh king of Egypt unto all that trust on him. But if ye say unto me, We trust in the LORD our God: is not that he whose high places and whose altars Hezekiah hath taken away, and hath said to Judah and to Jerusalem, Ye shall worship before this altar in Jerusalem? Now therefore, I pray thee, give pledges to my master the king of Assyria, and I will give thee two thousand horses, if thou be able on thy part to set riders upon them. How then canst thou turn away the face of one captain of the least of my master's servants, and put thy trust on Egypt for chariots and for horsemen? Am I now come up without the LORD against this place to destroy it? The LORD said unto me, Go up against this land, and destroy it.

Then said Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, and Shebnah, and Joah, unto Rabshakeh, Speak, I pray thee, to thy servants in the Syrian language; for we understand it: and speak not with us in the Jews' language, in the ears of the people that are on the wall. But Rabshakeh said unto

them, Hath my master sent me to thy master, and to thee, to speak these words? hath he not sent me to the men which sit on the wall, to eat their own dung, and to drink their own water with you? Then Rabshakeh stood, and cried with a loud voice in the Jews' language, and spake, saying, Hear ye the word of the great king, the king of Assyria. Thus saith the king, Let not Hezekiah deceive you; for he shall not be able to deliver you out of his hand: neither let Hezekiah make you trust in the LORD saying, the LORD will surely deliver us, and this city shall not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria. Hearken not to Hezekiah: for thus saith the king of Assyria, Make your peace with me, and come out to me; and eat ye every one of his vine, and every one of his fig tree, and drink ye every one the waters of his own cistern; until I come and take you away to a land like your own land, a land of corn and wine, a land of bread and vineyards, a land of oil olive and of honey, that ye may live, and not die: and hearken not unto Hezekiah, when he persuadeth you, saying, The LORD will deliver us. Hath any of the gods of the nations ever delivered his land out of the hand of the king of Assyria. Where are the gods of Hamath, and of Arpad? where are the gods of Sepharvaim, of Hena, and Ivvah? have they delivered Samaria out of my hand? Who are they among all the gods of the countries, that have delivered their country out of my hand, that the LORD should deliver Jerusalem out of my hand? But the people held their peace, and answered him not a word: for the king's commandment was, saying, Answer him not. Then came Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, which was over the household, and Shebna the scribe, and Joah the son of Asaph the recorder, to Hezekiah with their clothes rent, and told him the words of Rabshakeh.

And it came to pass, when king Hezekiah heard it, that he rent his clothes, and covered himself with sackcloth, and went into the house of the LORD. And he sent Eliakim, which was over the household, and Shebna the scribe, and the elders of the priests, covered with sackcloth, unto Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz. And they said unto him, Thus saith Hezekiah, This day is a day of trouble, and of rebuke, and of contumely: for the children are come to the birth, and there is not strength to bring forth. It may be the LORD thy God will hear all the words of Rabshakeh, whom the king of Assyria his master hath sent to reproach the living God, and will rebuke the words which the LORD thy God hath heard: wherefore lift up thy prayer for the remnant that is left. So the servants of king Hezekiah came to Isaiah. And Isaiah said unto them, Thus shall ye say to your master, Thus saith the LORD, Be not afraid of the words that thou hast heard, wherewith the servants of the king of Assyria have blasphemed me. Behold, I will put a spirit in him, and he shall hear a rumour, and shall return to his own land; and I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land.

So Rabshakeh returned, and found the king of Assyria warring against Libnah: for he had heard that he was departed from Lachish. And when he heard say of Tirhakah king of Ethiopia, Behold, he is come out to fight against thee: he sent messengers again unto Hezekiah, saying, Thus shall ye speak to Hezekiah king of Judah, saying, Let not thy God in whom thou trustest deceive thee, saying, Jerusalem shall not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria. Behold thou hast heard what the kings of Assyria have done to all lands, by destroying them utterly: and shalt thou be delivered? Have the gods of the nations delivered them, which my fathers have destroyed, Gozan, and Haran, and Rezeph, and the children of Eden which were in Telassar? Where is the king of Hamath, and the king of Arpad, and the king of the city of Sepharvaim, of Hena, and Ivvah? And Hezekiah received the letter from the hand of the messengers, and read it: and Hezekiah went up unto the house of the LORD, and spread it before the LORD. And Hezekiah prayed before the LORD, and said, O LORD, the God of Israel, that sittest upon the cherubim, thou art the God, even thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth; thou hast made heaven and earth. Incline thine ear, O LORD, and hear; open thine eyes, O LORD, and see; and hear the words of Sennacherib, wherewith he hath sent him to reproach the living God. Of a truth, LORD, the kings of Assyria have laid waste the nations and their lands, and have cast their gods into the fire: for they were no gods, but the work of men's hands, wood and stone; therefore they have destroyed them. Now therefore, O LORD our God, save thou us, I beseech thee, out of his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that thou art the LORD God, even thou only.

Then Isaiah the son of Amoz sent to Hezekiah, saying, Thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel, Whereas thou hast prayed to me against Sennacherib king of Assyria, I have heard thee. This is the word that the LORD hath spoken concerning him: The virgin daughter of Zion hath despised thee and laughed thee to scorn; the daughter of Jerusalem hath shaken her head at thee. Whom hast thou reproached and blasphemed? and against whom hast thou exalted thy voice and lifted up thine eyes on high? even against the Holy One of Israel. By thy messengers thou hast reproached the Lord, and hast said, With the multitude of my chariots am I come up to the height of the mountains, to the innermost parts of Lebanon; and I will cut down the tall cedars thereof, and the choice fir trees thereof: and I will enter into his farthest lodging place, the forest of his fruitful field. I have digged and drunk strange waters, and with the sole of my feet will I dry up all the rivers of Egypt. Hast thou not heard how I have done it long ago, and formed it of ancient times? now have I brought it to pass, that thou shouldest be to lay waste fenced cities into ruinous heaps. Therefore their inhabitants were of small power, they were dis-

mayed and confounded; they were as the grass of the field, and as the green herb, as the grass on the housetops, and as corn blasted before it be grown up. But I know thy sitting down, and thy going out, and thy coming in, and thy raging against me. Because of thy raging against me, and for that thine arrogancy is come up into mine ears, therefore will I put my hook in thy nose, and my bridle in thy lips, and I will turn thee back by the way by which thou camest. And this shall be the sign unto thee: ye shall eat this year that which groweth of itself, and in the second year that which springeth of the same; and in the third year sow ye, and reap, and plant vineyards, and eat the fruit thereof. And the remnant that is escaped of the house of Judah shall again take root downward, and bear fruit upward. For out of Jerusalem shall go forth a remnant, and out of mount Zion they that shall escape: the zeal of the LORD shall perform this. Therefore thus saith the LORD concerning the king of Assyria, He shall not come unto this city, nor shoot an arrow there, neither shall he come before it with shield, nor cast a mount against it. By the way that he came, by the same shall he return, and he shall not come unto this city, saith the LORD. For I will defend this city to save it, for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake. [*From* II KINGS, 18 and 19.]

Jerusalem during the siege

The burden of the valley of vision.

What aileth thee now,
That thou art wholly gone up to the housetops?
O thou that art full of shoutings,
A tumultuous city, a joyous town;
Thy slain are not slain with the sword,
Neither are they dead in battle.
All thy rulers fled away together,
They were bound by the archers:
All that were found of thee were bound together,
They fled afar off.

Therefore said I, Look away from me, I will weep bitterly; labour not to comfort me, for the spoiling of the daughter of my people. For it is a day of discomfiture, and of treading down, and of perplexity, from the Lord, the LORD of hosts, in the valley of vision; a breaking down of the walls, and a crying to the mountains. And Elam bare the quiver, with chariots of men and horsemen; and Kir uncovered the shield. And it came to pass, that thy choicest valleys were full of chariots, and the horsemen set themselves in array at the gate. And he took away the covering of Judah; and thou didst look in that day to the armour in the house of the forest. And ye saw the breaches of the city of David, that they were many:

and ye gathered together the waters of the lower pool. And ye numbered the houses of Jerusalem, and ye brake down the houses to fortify the wall. Ye made also a reservoir between the two walls for the water of the old pool: but ye looked not unto him that had done this, neither had ye respect unto him that fashioned it long ago. And in that day did the Lord, the LORD of hosts, call to weeping, and to mourning, and to baldness, and to girding with sackcloth: and behold, joy and gladness, slaying oxen and killing sheep, eating flesh and drinking wine: let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we shall die. And the LORD of hosts revealed himself in mine ears, Surely this iniquity shall not be purged from you till ye die, saith the Lord, the LORD of hosts.

Rise up, ye women that are at ease, and hear my voice;
Ye careless daughters, give ear unto my speech.
For days beyond a year shall ye be troubled, ye careless women:
For the vintage shall fail,
The ingathering shall not come.
Tremble, ye women that are at ease;
Be troubled, ye careless ones:
Strip you, and make you bare,
And gird sackcloth upon your loins.
They shall smite upon the breasts for the pleasant fields,
For the fruitful vine.
Upon the land of my people shall come up thorns and briers;
Yea, upon all the houses of joy in the joyous city:
For the palace shall be forsaken;
The populous city shall be deserted;
The hill and the watch-tower shall be for dens for ever,
A joy of wild asses,
A pasture of flocks:

Behold, their valiant ones cry without:
The ambassadors of peace weep bitterly.
The high ways lie waste,
The wayfaring man ceaseth:
He hath broken the covenant,
He hath despised the cities,
He regardeth not man.
The land mourneth and languisheth;
Lebanon is ashamed and withereth away:
Sharon is like a desert;
And Bashan and Carmel shake off their leaves.

[*From* ISAIAH, 22, 32, and 33.]

During the siege of Jerusalem, Isaiah and Micah rebuked their countrymen for their sins and follies, but predicted their deliverance from their present troubles and drew a picture of their subsequent happiness.

Israel's sins are the cause of the Assyrians' invasion

The vision of Isaiah the son of Amoz, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem, in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah.
Hear, O heavens,
And give ear, O earth,
For the LORD hath spoken:
I have nourished and brought up children,
And they have rebelled against me.
The ox knoweth his owner,
And the ass his master's crib:
But Israel doth not know,
My people doth not consider.
Ah sinful nation,
A people laden with iniquity,
A seed of evil-doers,
Children that deal corruptly:
They have forsaken the LORD,
They have despised the Holy One of Israel,
They are estranged and gone backward.
Why will ye be still stricken,
That ye revolt more and more?
The whole head is sick,
And the whole heart faint.
From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it;
But wounds, and bruises, and festering sores:
They have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with oil.
Your country is desolate;
Your cities are burned with fire;
Your land, strangers devour it in your presence,
And it is desolate, as overthrown by strangers.
And the daughter of Zion is left as a booth in a vineyard,
As a lodge in a garden of cucumbers,
As a besieged city.
Except the LORD of hosts had left unto us a very small remnant,
We should have been as Sodom,
We should have been like unto Gomorrah.

Hear the word of the LORD, ye rulers of Sodom;
Give ear unto the law of our God, ye people of Gomorrah.
To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the LORD:
I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts;

And I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he-goats.
When ye come to appear before me,
Who hath required this at your hand, to trample my courts?
Bring no more vain oblations;
Incense is an abomination unto me;
New moon and sabbath, the calling of assemblies,—
I cannot away with iniquity and the solemn meeting.
Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth:
They are a trouble unto me;
I am weary to bear them.
And when ye spread forth your hands,
I will hide mine eyes from you:
Yea, when ye make many prayers,
I will not hear: your hands are full of blood.
Wash you, make you clean;
Put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes;
Cease to do evil;
Learn to do well;
Seek judgement,
Relieve the oppressed,
Judge the fatherless,
Plead for the widow.

Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD:
Though your sins be as scarlet,
They shall be as white as snow;
Though they be red like crimson,
They shall be as wool.
If ye be willing and obedient,
Ye shall eat the good of the land:
But if ye refuse and rebel,
Ye shall be devoured with the sword:
For the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it.

How is the faithful city become an harlot!
She that was full of judgement!
Righteousness lodged in her,
But now murderers.
Thy silver is become dross,
Thy wine mixed with water.
Thy princes are rebellious, and companions of thieves;
Every one loveth gifts, and followeth after rewards:
They judge not the fatherless,
Neither doth the cause of the widow come unto them.

Therefore saith the Lord, the LORD of hosts, the Mighty One of Israel,

Ah, I will ease me of mine adversaries,
And avenge me of mine enemies:
And I will turn my hand upon thee,
And throughly purge away thy dross,
And will take away all thy tin:
And I will restore thy judges as at the first,
And thy counsellors as at the beginning:
Afterward thou shalt be called The city of righteousness, the faithful city.
Zion shall be redeemed with judgement,
And her converts with righteousness.
But the destruction of the transgressors and the sinners shall be together,
And they that forsake the LORD shall be consumed.
For they shall be ashamed of the oaks which ye have desired,
And ye shall be confounded for the gardens that ye have chosen.
For ye shall be as an oak whose leaf fadeth,
And as a garden that hath no water.
And the strong shall be as tow,
And his work as a spark;
And they shall both burn together,
And none shall quench them. [*From* ISAIAH, 1.[1]]

Hear, I pray you, ye heads of Jacob,
And rulers of the house of Israel:
Is it not for you to know judgement?
Who hate the good, and love the evil;
Who pluck off their skin from off them,
And their flesh from off their bones;
Who also eat the flesh of my people;
And they flay their skin from off them,
And break their bones:
Yea, they chop them in pieces, as for the pot,
And as flesh within the caldron.
Then shall they cry unto the LORD,
But he will not answer them:
Yea, he will hide his face from them at that time,
According as they have wrought evil in their doings.

Hear this, I pray you, ye heads of the house of Jacob,
And rulers of the house of Israel,
That abhor judgement,
And pervert all equity.
They build up Zion with blood,
And Jerusalem with iniquity.
The heads thereof judge for reward,

[1] This chapter may refer to the time of the earlier invasion of Palestine by Sargon.

And the priests thereof teach for hire,
And the prophets thereof divine for money:
Yet will they lean upon the LORD, and say,
Is not the LORD in the midst of us?
No evil shall come upon us.
Therefore shall Zion for your sake be plowed as a field,
And Jerusalem shall become heaps,
And the mountain of the house as the high places of a forest.

[*From* MICAH, 3.]

Jerusalem will triumph over the foes that besiege her.

And now many nations are assembled against thee, that say,
Let her be defiled,
And let our eye see its desire upon Zion.
But they know not the thoughts of the LORD,
Neither understand they his counsel:
For he hath gathered them
As the sheaves to the threshing-floor.
Arise and thresh, O daughter of Zion:
For I will make thine horn iron,
And I will make thy hoofs brass:
And thou shalt beat in pieces many peoples:
And thou shalt devote their gain unto the LORD,
And their substance unto the Lord of the whole earth.
Now shalt thou gather thyself in troops, O daughter of troops:
He hath laid siege against us:
They shall smite the judge of Israel with a rod upon the cheek.

But thou, Beth-lehem Ephrathah,
Which art little to be among the thousands of Judah,
Out of thee shall one come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel;
Whose goings forth are from of old, from everlasting.
Therefore will he give them up, until the time that she which travaileth hath brought forth:
Then the residue of his brethren shall return unto the children of Israel.
And he shall stand, and shall feed his flock in the strength of the LORD,
In the majesty of the name of the LORD his God:
And they shall abide;
For now shall he be great unto the ends of the earth.
And this man shall be our peace:
When the Assyrian shall come into our land,
And when he shall tread in our palaces,
Then shall we raise against him seven shepherds, and eight principal men.

And they shall waste the land of Assyria with the sword,
And the land of Nimrod in the entrances thereof:
And he shall deliver us from the Assyrian,
When he cometh into our land,
And when he treadeth within our border.
And the remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many peoples as dew from the LORD,
As showers upon the grass;
That tarrieth not for man,
Nor waiteth for the sons of men. [*From* MICAH, 4 and 5.]

The pride of the Assyrians shall be brought low, when they have served their purpose.

Ho Assyrian, the rod of mine anger,
The staff in whose hand is mine indignation!
I will send him against a profane nation,
And against the people of my wrath will I give him a charge,
To take the spoil, and to take the prey,
And to tread them down like the mire of the streets.
Howbeit he meaneth not so,
Neither doth his heart think so;
But it is in his heart to destroy,
And to cut off nations not a few.
For he saith, Are not my princes all of them kings?
Is not Calno as Carchemish?
Is not Hamath as Arpad?
Is not Samaria as Damascus?
As my hand hath found the kingdoms of the idols,
Whose graven images did excel them of Jerusalem and of Samaria;
Shall I not, as I have done unto Samaria and her idols,
So do to Jerusalem and her idols?
Wherefore it shall come to pass, that when the Lord hath performed his whole work upon mount Zion and on Jerusalem,
I will punish the fruit of the stout heart of the king of Assyria, and the glory of his high looks.
For he hath said, By the strength of my hand I have done it, and by my wisdom; for I am prudent:
And I have removed the bounds of the peoples, and have robbed their treasures, and I have brought down as a valiant man them that sit on thrones:
And my hand hath found as a nest the riches of the peoples;
And as one gathereth eggs that are forsaken, have I gathered all the earth:
And there was none that moved the wing,
Or that opened the mouth, or chirped.
Shall the axe boast itself against him that heweth therewith?

Shall the saw magnify itself against him that shaketh it?
As if a rod should shake them that lift it up,
Or as if a staff should lift up him that is not wood.
Therefore shall the Lord, the Lord of hosts, send among his fat ones leanness;
And under his glory there shall be kindled a burning like the burning of fire.
And the light of Israel shall be for a fire,
And his Holy One for a flame:
And it shall burn and devour his thorns and his briers in one day.
And he shall consume the glory of his forest, and of his fruitful field, both soul and body:
And it shall be as when a standardbearer fainteth.
And the remnant of the trees of his forest shall be few,
That a child may write them. [ISAIAH, 10. 5–19.]

5. THE DISCOMFITURE OF THE ASSYRIANS IN THE MOMENT OF TRIUMPH

Ho Ariel, Ariel,
The city where David encamped!
Add ye year to year;
Let the feasts come round:
Then will I distress Ariel,
And there shall be mourning and lamentation:
And she shall be unto me as Ariel.
And I will camp against thee round about,
And will lay siege against thee with a fort,
And I will raise siege works against thee.
And thou shalt be brought down,
And shalt speak out of the ground,
And thy speech shall be low out of the dust;
And thy voice shall be as of one that hath a familiar spirit, out of the ground,
And thy speech shall whisper out of the dust.

But the multitude of thy foes shall be like small dust,
And the multitude of the terrible ones as chaff that passeth away:
Yea, it shall be at an instant suddenly.
She shall be visited of the LORD of hosts with thunder,
And with earthquake, and great noise,
With whirlwind and tempest,
And the flame of a devouring fire.
And the multitude of all the nations that fight against Ariel,
Even all that fight against her and her strong hold, and that distress her,
Shall be as a dream, a vision of the night.

And it shall be as when an hungry man dreameth and, behold, he eateth;
But he awaketh, and his soul is empty:
Or as when a thirsty man dreameth, and, behold, he drinketh;
But he awaketh, and, behold, he is faint,
And his soul hath appetite:
So shall the multitude of all the nations be, that fight against mount Zion.

Ah, the uproar of many peoples,[1]
Which roar like the roaring of the seas;
And the rushing of nations,
That rush like the rushing of mighty waters!
The nations shall rush like the rushing of many waters:
But he shall rebuke them, and they shall flee far off,
And shall be chased as the chaff of the mountains before the wind,
And like the whirling dust before the storm.
At eventide behold terror;
And before the morning they are not.
This is the portion of them that spoil us,
And the lot of them that rob us.

Behold, the name of the LORD cometh from far,
Burning with his anger,
And in thick rising smoke:
His lips are full of indignation,
And his tongue is as a devouring fire:
And his breath is as an overflowing stream,
That reacheth even unto the neck,
To sift the nations with the sieve of vanity:
And a bridle that causeth to err shall be in the jaws of the peoples.
Ye shall have a song as in the night when a holy feast is kept;
And gladness of heart, as when one goeth with a pipe to come into the mountain of the LORD, to the Rock of Israel.
And the LORD shall cause his glorious voice to be heard,
And shall shew the lighting down of his arm,
With the indignation of his anger,
And the flame of a devouring fire,
With a blast, and tempest, and hailstones.
For through the voice of the LORD shall the Assyrian be broken in pieces, which smote with a rod.
And every stroke of the appointed staff, which the LORD shall lay upon him, shall be with tabrets and harps:
And in battles of shaking will he fight with them.
For a Topheth is prepared of old;
Yea, for the king it is made ready;

[1] i. e., the Assyrian hordes.

He hath made it deep and large:
The pile thereof is fire and much wood;
The breath of the LORD, like a stream of brimstone, doth kindle it.

[*From* ISAIAH, 17, 29, and 30.]

And it came to pass that night, that the angel of the LORD went forth, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians an hundred fourscore and five thousand: and when men arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses. So Sennacherib king of Assyria departed, and went and returned, and dwelt at Nineveh.

[*From* II KINGS, 19.]

Isaiah's vision of the New Jerusalem

Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness,
And princes shall rule in judgement.
And a man shall be as an hiding place from the wind,
And a covert from the tempest;
As rivers of water in a dry place,
As the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.
And the eyes of them that see shall not be dim,
And the ears of them that hear shall hearken.
The heart also of the rash shall understand knowledge,
And the tongue of the stammerers shall be ready to speak plainly.

Then judgement shall dwell in the wilderness,
And righteousness shall abide in the fruitful field.
And the work of righteousness shall be peace;
And the effect of righteousness quietness and confidence for ever.
And my people shall abide in a peaceable habitation,
And in sure dwellings,
And in quiet resting places.
But it shall hail, in the downfall of the forest;
And the city shall be utterly laid low.
Blessed are ye that sow beside all waters,
That send forth the feet of the ox and the ass.

[*From* ISAIAH, 32.]

And there shall come forth a shoot out of the stock of Jesse,
And a branch out of his roots shall bear fruit:
And the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him,
The spirit of wisdom and understanding,
The spirit of counsel and might,
The spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD;
And his delight shall be in the fear of the LORD:
And he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes,
Neither reprove after the hearing of his ears:
But with righteousness shall he judge the poor,

And reprove with equity for the meek of the earth:
And he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth,
And with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked.
And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins,
And faithfulness the girdle of his reins.
And the wolf shall dwell with the lamb,
And the leopard shall lie down with the kid;
And the calf and the young lion and the fatling together;
And a little child shall lead them.
And the cow and the bear shall feed;
Their young ones shall lie down together:
And the lion shall eat straw like the ox.
And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp,
And the weaned child shall put his hand on the basilisk's den.
They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain:
For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD,
As the waters cover the sea. [*From* ISAIAH, 11.]

6. ASSYRIA THE RULING POWER OF THE WORLD
(Period *c.* 700–621 B.C.)

The defeat of the Assyrians before Jerusalem, however, was only temporary. Hezekiah and Isaiah died shortly afterwards, and during the following twenty-five years under Sennacherib, Esar-haddon, and Assur-bani-pal, the Assyrian empire, 'the most brutal empire which was ever suffered to roll its force across the world,' reached the height of its prosperity, and became lord of the civilized world, including Egypt.[1] *Ambitious, rapacious, wealthy, insolent, and pitiless, their kings were the scourge of all with whom they came in contact, including the people of Judah who paid tribute to them and were much at their mercy. At the same time the people sank at home to the lowest depths of licentiousness and corruption, adopting during the long reign of Manasseh the foul and inhuman customs of their neighbours. The state of the country early in this period is thus described by Micah.*

The degradation of the whole nation

Woe is me!
For I am as when they have gathered the summer fruits,
As the grape gleanings of the vintage:
There is no cluster to eat;
My soul desireth the firstripe fig.
The godly man is perished out of the earth,
And there is none upright among men:
They all lie in wait for blood;
They hunt every man his brother with a net.
Their hands are upon that which is evil to do it diligently;

[1] See Note C, at the end of this volume.

The prince asketh, and the judge is ready for a reward;
And the great man, he uttereth the mischief of his soul:
Thus they weave it together.
The best of them is as a brier:
The most upright is worse than a thorn hedge:
The day of thy watchmen, even thy visitation, is come;
Now shall be their perplexity.
Trust ye not in a friend,
Put ye not confidence in a guide:
Keep the doors of thy mouth from her that lieth in thy bosom.
For the son dishonoureth the father,
The daughter riseth up against her mother,
The daughter in law against her mother in law;
A man's enemies are the men of his own house.

[MICAH, 7. 1–6.]

Jehovah pleads with his people

Hear ye now what the LORD saith:
Arise, contend thou before the mountains,
And let the hills hear thy voice.
Hear, O ye mountains, the LORD'S controversy,
And ye enduring foundations of the earth:
For the LORD hath a controversy with his people,
And he will plead with Israel.

Jehovah pleads

O my people, what have I done unto thee?
And wherein have I wearied thee?
Testify against me.
For I brought thee up out of the land of Egypt,
And redeemed thee out of the house of bondage;
And I sent before thee Moses, Aaron, and Miriam.
O my people, remember now what Balak king of Moab consulted,
And what Balaam the son of Beor answered him;
Remember from Shittim unto Gilgal,
That ye may know the righteous acts of the LORD.

The people's inquiry

Wherewith shall I come before the LORD,
And bow myself before the high God?
Shall I come before him with burnt offerings,
With calves of a year old?
Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams,
Or with ten thousands of rivers of oil?
Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression,
The fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?

The prophet's reply

He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good;
And what doth the LORD require of thee,
But to do justly,
And to love mercy,
And to walk humbly with thy God? [MICAH, 6. 1–8.]

Later on, Zephaniah painted the same picture of Jerusalem.

Woe to her that is rebellious and polluted, to the oppressing city!
She obeyed not the voice;
She received not correction:
She trusted not in the LORD;
She drew not near to her God.
Her princes in the midst of her are roaring lions;
Her judges are evening wolves;
They leave nothing till the morrow.
Her prophets are light and treacherous persons:
Her priests have profaned the sanctuary,
They have done violence to the law. [ZEPHANIAH, 3. 1–4.]

He predicted a terrible punishment for his countrymen.

I will utterly consume all things from off the face of the ground,
Saith the LORD.
I will consume man and beast;
I will consume the fowls of the heaven,
And the fishes of the sea,
And the stumblingblocks with the wicked;
And I will cut off man from off the face of the ground,
Saith the LORD.

And I will stretch out mine hand upon Judah,
And upon all the inhabitants of Jerusalem;
And I will cut off the remnant of Baal from this place,
And the name of the Chemarim with the priests;
And them that worship the host of heaven upon the housetops;
And them that worship, which swear to the LORD and swear by Malcam;
And them that are turned back from following the LORD;
And those that have not sought the LORD,
Nor inquired after him.

Hold thy peace at the presence of the Lord GOD:
For the day of the LORD is at hand:
For the LORD hath prepared a sacrifice,
He hath sanctified his guests.
And it shall come to pass in the day of the LORD's sacrifice,
That I will punish the princes, and the king's sons,

And all such as are clothed with foreign apparel.
And in that day I will punish all those that leap over the threshold,
Which fill their master's house with violence and deceit.
And in that day, saith the LORD, there shall be the noise of a cry from the fish gate,
And an howling from the second quarter,
And a great crashing from the hills.
Howl, ye inhabitants of Maktesh,
For all the people of Canaan are undone:
All they that were laden with silver are cut off.
And it shall come to pass at that time,
That I will search Jerusalem with candles;
And I will punish the men that are settled on their lees,
That say in their heart, The LORD will not do good,
Neither will he do evil.
And their wealth shall become a spoil,
And their houses a desolation:
Yea, they shall build houses, but shall not inhabit them;
And they shall plant vineyards,
But shall not drink the wine thereof.

The great day of the LORD is near,
It is near and hasteth greatly,
Even the voice of the day of the LORD;
The mighty man crieth there bitterly.
That day is a day of wrath,
A day of trouble and distress,
A day of wasteness and desolation,
A day of darkness and gloominess,
A day of clouds and thick darkness,
A day of the trumpet and alarm,
Against the fenced cities,
And against the high battlements.
And I will bring distress upon men,
That they shall walk like blind men,
Because they have sinned against the LORD:
And their blood shall be poured out as dust,
And their flesh as dung.
Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of the LORD'S wrath;
But the whole land shall be devoured by the fire of his jealousy:
For he shall make an end, yea, a terrible end,
Of all them that dwell in the land. [*From* ZEPHANIAH, I.]

Assyria also will be punished.

And [the Lord] will stretch out his hand against the north,
And destroy Assyria;

And will make Nineveh a desolation;
And dry like the wilderness.
And herds shall lie down in the midst of her,
All the beasts of the nations:
Both the pelican and the porcupine shall lodge in the chapiters thereof:
Their voice shall sing in the windows;
Desolation shall be in the thresholds:
For he hath laid bare the cedar work.
This is the joyous city that dwelt carelessly,
That said in her heart, I am, and there is none else beside me:
How is she become a desolation,
A place for beasts to lie down in!
Every one that passeth by her shall hiss, and wag his hand.

[ZEPHANIAH, 2. 13–end.]

7. JOSIAH AND THE BOOK OF THE LAW

A last attempt to save the nation was made by Josiah who reigned from about 639–608. *In* 621 *the Book of the Law, that is the greater part of the book of Deuteronomy, was found in Jerusalem while the people were restoring the temple and Josiah tries to purify and strengthen his people by reversion to an earlier and more humane religion.*

And it came to pass in the eighteenth year of king Josiah, that the king sent Shaphan the son of Azaliah, the son of Meshullam, the scribe, to the house of the LORD, saying, Go up to Hilkiah the high priest, that he may sum the money which is brought into the house of the LORD, which the keepers of the door have gathered of the people: and let them deliver it into the hand of the workmen that have the oversight of the house of the LORD: and let them give it to the workmen which are in the house of the LORD, to repair the breaches of the house; unto the carpenters, and to the builders, and to the masons; and for buying timber and hewn stone to repair the house. Howbeit there was no reckoning made with them of the money that was delivered into their hand; for they dealt faithfully. And Hilkiah the high priest said unto Shaphan the scribe, I have found the book of the law in the house of the LORD. And Hilkiah delivered the book to Shaphan, and he read it. And Shaphan the scribe came to the king, and brought the king word again, and said, Thy servants have emptied out the money that was found in the house, and have delivered it into the hand of the workmen that have the oversight of the house of the LORD. And Shaphan the scribe told the king, saying, Hilkiah the priest hath delivered me a book. And Shaphan read it before the king. And it came to pass, when the king had heard the words of the book of the law, that he rent his clothes. And the king commanded Hilkiah the priest, and

Ahikan the son of Shaphan, and Achbor the son of Micaiah, and Shaphan the scribe, and Asaiah the king's servant, saying, Go ye, inquire of the LORD for me, and for the people, and for all Judah, concerning the words of this book that is found: for great is the wrath of the LORD that is kindled against us, because our fathers have not hearkened unto the words of this book, to do according unto all that which is written concerning us. So Hilkiah the priest, and Ahikam, and Achbor, and Shaphan, and Asaiah, went unto Huldah the prophetess, the wife of Shallum the son of Tikvah, the son of Harhas, keeper of the wardrobe; (now she dwelt in Jerusalem in the second quarter;) and they communed with her. And she said unto them. Thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel: Tell ye the man that sent you unto me, Thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will bring evil upon this place, and upon the inhabitants thereof, even all the words of the book which the king of Judah hath read: because they have forsaken me, and have burned incense unto other gods, that they might provoke me to anger with all the work of their hands; therefore my wrath shall be kindled against this place, and it shall not be quenched. But unto the king of Judah, who sent you to inquire of the LORD, thus shall ye say to him, Thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel: As touching the words which thou hast heard, because thine heart was tender, and thou didst humble thyself before the LORD, when thou heardest what I spake against this place, and against the inhabitants thereof, that they should become a desolation and a curse, and hast rent thy clothes, and wept before me; I also have heard thee, saith the LORD. Therefore, behold, I will gather thee to thy fathers, and thou shalt be gathered to thy grave in peace, neither shall thine eyes see all the evil which I will bring upon this place. And they brought the king word again.

And the king sent, and they gathered unto him all the elders of Judah and of Jerusalem. And the king went up to the house of the LORD, and all the men of Judah and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem with him, and the priests, and the prophets, and all the people, both small and great: and he read in their ears all the words of the book of the covenant which was found in the house of the LORD. And the king stood by the pillar, and made a covenant before the LORD, to walk after the LORD, and to keep his commandments, and his testimonies, and his statutes, with all his heart, and all his soul, to confirm the words of this covenant that were written in this book: and all the people stood to the covenant. And the king commanded Hilkiah the high priest, and the priests of the second order, and the keepers of the door, to bring forth out of the temple of the LORD all the vessels that were made for Baal, and for the Asherah, and for all the host of heaven: and he burned them without Jerusalem in the fields of Kidron, and carried the ashes of them unto Beth-el. And he put down the idolatrous priests, whom the kings of Judah had ordained to burn incense in the high places in the cities of

Judah, and in the places round about Jerusalem; them also that burned incense unto Baal, to the sun, and to the moon, and to the planets, and to all the host of heaven. And he brought out the Asherah from the house of the LORD, without Jerusalem, unto the brook Kidron, and burned it at the brook Kidron, and stamped it small to powder, and cast the powder thereof upon the graves of the common people. And he brake down the houses of the sodomites, that were in the house of the LORD, where the women wove hangings for the Asherah. And he brought all the priests out of the cities of Judah, and defiled the high places where the priests had burned incense, from Geba to Beer-sheba; and he brake down the high places of the gates that were at the entering in of the gate of Joshua the governor of the city, which were on a man's left hand at the gate of the city. Nevertheless the priests of the high places came not up to the altar of the LORD in Jerusalem, but they did eat unleavened bread among their brethren. And he defiled Topheth, which is in the valley of the children of Hinnom, that no man might make his son or his daughter to pass through the fire to Molech. And he took away the horses that the kings of Judah had given to the sun, at the entering in of the house of the LORD, by the chamber of Nathan-melech the chamberlain, which was in the precincts; and he burned the chariots of the sun with fire. And the altars that were on the roof of the upper chamber of Ahaz, which the kings of Judah had made, and the altars which Manasseh had made in the two courts of the house of the LORD, did the king break down, and beat them down from thence, and cast the dust of them into the brook Kidron. And the high places that were before Jerusalem, which were on the right hand of the mount of corruption, which Solomon the king of Israel had builded for Ashtoreth the abomination of the Zidonians, and for Chemosh the abomination of Moab, and for Milcom the abomination of the children of Ammon, did the king defile. And he brake in pieces the pillars, and cut down the Asherim, and filled their places with the bones of men. Moreover the altar that was at Beth-el, and the high place which Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin, had made, even that altar and the high place he brake down; and he burned the high place and stamped it small to powder, and burned the Asherah. And as Josiah turned himself, he spied the sepulchres that were there in the mount; and he sent, and took the bones out of the sepulchres, and burned them upon the altar, and defiled it, according to the word of the LORD which the man of God proclaimed, who proclaimed these things. Then he said, What monument is that which I see? And the men of the city told him, It is the sepulchre of the man of God, which came from Judah, and proclaimed these things that thou hast done against the altar of Beth-el. And he said, Let him be; let no man move his bones. So they let his bones alone, with the bones of the prophet that came out of Samaria. And all

the houses also of the high places that were in the cities of Samaria, which the kings of Israel had made to provoke the LORD to anger, Josiah took away, and did to them according to all the acts that he had done in Beth-el. And he slew all the priests of the high places that were there, upon the altars, and burned men's bones upon them; and he returned to Jerusalem.

And the king commanded all the people, saying, Keep the passover unto the LORD your God, as it is written in this book of the covenant. Surely there was not kept such a passover from the days of the judges that judged Israel, nor in all the days of the kings of Israel, nor of the kings of Judah; but in the eighteenth year of king Josiah was this passover kept to the LORD in Jerusalem. Moreover them that had familiar spirits, and the wizards, and the teraphim, and the idols, and all the abominations that were spied in the land of Judah and in Jerusalem, did Josiah put away, that he might confirm the words of the law which were written in the book that Hilkiah the priest found in the house of the LORD. And like unto him was there no king before him, that turned to the LORD with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his might, according to all the law of Moses; neither after him arose there any like him.

[*From* II KINGS, 22 and 23.]

The king's task was made more feasible by the weakening of pressure from Assyria. The power of that empire was now tottering, and after the death of Assur-bani-pal in 625, *his empire began to wither away, and for a short time the East was in a state of flux and change. But Josiah's reconstitution of his people was neither complete nor permanent, and Jeremiah, who began his work about this time, warned them that danger was still ahead of them.*

Flee for safety, ye children of Benjamin, out of the midst of Jerusalem,
And blow the trumpet in Tekoa,
And raise up a signal on Beth-haccherem:
For evil looketh forth from the north,
And a great destruction.
The comely and delicate one, the daughter of Zion, will I cut off.
Shepherds with their flocks shall come unto her;
They shall pitch their tents against her round about;
They shall feed every one in his place.
Prepare ye war against her;
Arise, and let us go up at noon.
Woe unto us! for the day declineth,
For the shadows of the evening are stretched out.
Arise, and let us go up by night,
And let us destroy her palaces.
For thus hath the LORD of hosts said,

Hew ye down trees, and cast up a mount against Jerusalem:
This is the city to be visited;
She is wholly oppression in the midst of her.
As a well casteth forth her waters,
So she casteth forth her wickedness:
Violence and spoil is heard in her;
Before me continually is sickness and wounds.
Be thou instructed, O Jerusalem,
Lest my soul be alienated from thee;
Lest I make thee a desolation,
A land not inhabited.

Thus saith the LORD of hosts,
They shall thoroughly glean the remnant of Israel as a vine:
Turn again thine hand as a grapegatherer into the baskets.
To whom shall I speak and testify, that they may hear?
Behold, their ear is uncircumcised, and they cannot hearken:
Behold, the word of the LORD is become unto them a reproach;
They have no delight in it.
Therefore I am full of the fury of the LORD;
I am weary with holding in:
Pour it out upon the children in the street,
And upon the assembly of young men together:
For even the husband with the wife shall be taken,
The aged with him that is full of days.
And their houses shall be turned unto others,
Their fields and their wives together:
For I will stretch out my hand upon the inhabitants of the land,
Saith the LORD. [JEREMIAH, 6. 1–12.]

Jeremiah pictures Jerusalem mourning for her desolation.

Woe is me for my hurt!
My wound is grievous:
But I said, Truly this is my grief,
And I must bear it.
My tent is spoiled, and all my cords are broken:
My children are gone forth of me, and they are not:
There is none to stretch forth my tent any more,
And to set up my curtains.
For the shepherds are become brutish,
And have not inquired of the LORD:
Therefore they have not prospered,
And all their flocks are scattered.
The voice of a rumour, behold it cometh,
And a great commotion out of the north country,
To make the cities of Judah a desolation,
A dwelling place of jackals. [JEREMIAH, 10. 19–22.]

8. ASSYRIA OVERTHROWN BY BABYLON[1]

The fall of Nineveh (607 B. C.)

At the end of Josiah's reign, the power of Assyria was finally broken by the capture and destruction of Nineveh by Nabopolassar, a Chaldaean vassal Governor of Babylon, aided by the Medes under Cyaxares. The destruction of Nineveh is thus foretold and gloated over by Nahum.

He that dasheth in pieces is come up before thy face:
Keep the munition,
Watch the way,
Make thy lions strong,
Fortify thy power mightily.

For the LORD bringeth again the excellency of Jacob,
As the excellency of Israel:
For the emptiers have emptied them out,
And marred their vine branches.

The shield of his mighty men is made red,
The valiant men are in scarlet:
The chariots flash with steel in the day of his preparation,
And the spears are shaken terribly.

The chariots rage in the streets,
They justle one against another in the broad ways:
The appearance of them is like torches,
They run like the lightnings.

He remembereth his worthies:
They stumble in their march;
They make haste to the wall thereof,
And the mantelet is prepared.

The gates of the rivers are opened,
And the palace is dissolved.
And Huzzab is uncovered,
She is carried away,
And her handmaids mourn as with the voice of doves,
Tabering upon their breasts.

But Nineveh hath been from of old like a pool of water:
Yet they flee away;
Stand, stand, they cry;
But none looketh back.

Take ye the spoil of silver,
Take the spoil of gold:
For there is none end of the store,
The glory of all pleasant furniture.

[1] See Note C, at the end of this volume.

She is empty, and void, and waste:
And the heart melteth,
And the knees smite together,
And anguish is in all loins,
And the faces of them all are waxed pale.

Where is the den of the lions,
And the feeding place of the young lions,
Where the lion and the lioness walked, the lion's whelp,
And none made them afraid?
The lion did tear in pieces enough for his whelps,
And strangled for his lionesses,
And filled his caves with prey,
And his dens with ravin.

Behold, I am against thee, saith the LORD of hosts,
And I will burn her chariots in the smoke,
And the sword shall devour thy young lions:
And I will cut off thy prey from the earth,
And the voice of thy messengers shall no more be heard.

Woe to the bloody city!
It is all full of lies and rapine;
The prey departeth not.
The noise of the whip,
And the noise of the rattling of wheels;
And pransing horses,
And jumping chariots;
The horseman mounting,
And the flashing sword,
And the glittering spear;
And a multitude of slain,
And a great heap of carcases:
And there is none end of the corpses;
They stumble upon their corpses.

All thy fortresses shall be like fig trees with the firstripe figs:
If they be shaken, they fall into the mouth of the eater.

Behold, thy people in the midst of thee are women;
The gates of thy land are set wide open unto thine enemies:
The fire hath devoured thy bars.

Draw thee water for the siege,
Strengthen thy fortresses:
Go into the clay,
And tread the mortar,
Make strong the brickkiln.

There shall the fire devour thee;
The sword shall cut thee off,
It shall devour thee like the cankerworm:
Make thyself many as the cankerworm,
Make thyself many as the locust.
Thou hast multiplied thy merchants above the stars of heaven:
The cankerworm spoileth, and flieth away.
Thy crowned are as the locusts,
And thy marshals as the swarms of grasshoppers,
Which camp in the hedges in the cold day,
But when the sun ariseth they flee away,
And their place is not known where they are.

Thy shepherds slumber, O king of Assyria:
Thy worthies are at rest:
Thy people are scattered upon the mountains,
And there is none to gather them.

There is no assuaging of thy hurt;
Thy wound is grievous:
All that hear the bruit of thee clap the hands over thee;
For upon whom hath not thy wickedness passed continually?

[*From* NAHUM, 2 and 3.]

9. THE RISE OF BABYLON [1]

It was not long, however, before the new Chaldaean power ruling in Babylon entered into the full heritage of Assyria and rivalled her in wealth and lust of conquest. Habbakuk foresaw her power and thus described it.

Chaldaea, 'that bitter and hasty nation'

Behold ye among the nations,
And regard, and wonder marvellously:
For I work a work in your days,
Which ye will not believe though it be told you.
For, lo, I raise up the Chaldeans,
That bitter and hasty nation;
Which march through the breadth of the earth,
To possess dwelling places that are not theirs.
They are terrible and dreadful:
Their judgement and their dignity proceed from themselves.
Their horses also are swifter than leopards,
And are more fierce than the evening wolves;
And their horsemen spread themselves:
Yea, their horsemen come from far;
They fly as an eagle that hasteth to devour.
They come all of them for violence;

[1] See Note C, at the end of this volume.

Their faces are set eagerly as the east wind;
And they gather captives as the sand.
Yea, he scoffeth at kings,
And princes are a derision unto him:
He derideth every strong hold;
For he heapeth up dust, and taketh it.
Then shall he sweep by as a wind,
And shall pass over, and be guilty:
Even he whose might is his god.

[HABAKKUK, I. 5–11.]

All the nations take up their parable against the Chaldaeans.

Woe to him that increaseth that which is not his! how long?
And that ladeth himself with pledges!
Shall they not rise up suddenly that shall bite thee,
And awake that shall vex thee,
And thou shalt be for booties unto them?
Because thou hast spoiled many nations,
All the remnant of the peoples shall spoil thee;
Because of men's blood, and for the violence done to the land,
To the city and to all that dwell therein.

Woe to him that getteth an evil gain for his house,
That he may set his nest on high,
That he may be delivered from the hand of evil!
Thou hast consulted shame to thy house,
By cutting off many peoples,
And hast sinned against thy soul.
For the stone shall cry out of the wall,
And the beam out of the timber shall answer it.

Woe to him that buildeth a town with blood,
And stablisheth a city by iniquity!
Behold, is it not of the LORD of hosts that the peoples labour for the fire,
And the nations weary themselves for vanity?
For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD,
As the waters cover the sea.

Woe unto him that giveth his neighbour drink,
That addest thy venom thereto,
And makest him drunken also,
That thou mayest look on their nakedness!
Thou art filled with shame for glory:
Drink thou also, and be as one uncircumcised:
The cup of the LORD's right hand shall be turned unto thee,
And foul shame shall be upon thy glory.

For the violence done to Lebanon shall cover thee,
And the destruction of the beasts, which made them afraid;
Because of men's blood, and for the violence done to the land,
To the city and to all that dwell therein.

What profiteth the graven image,
That the maker thereof hath graven it;
The molten image, and the teacher of lies,
That the maker of his work trusteth therein,
To make dumb idols?
Woe unto him that saith to the wood, Awake;
To the dumb stone, Arise!
Shall this teach?
Behold, it is laid over with gold and silver,
And there is no breath at all in the midst of it.
But the LORD is in his holy temple:
Let all the earth keep silence before him.

[HABAKKUK, 2. 6–end.]

Jeremiah also foresaw that Babylon was the danger.

Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts; Because ye have not heard my words, Behold, I will send and take all the families of the north, saith the LORD, and I will send unto Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon, my servant, and will bring them against this land, and against the inhabitants thereof, and against all these nations round about; and I will utterly destroy them, and make them an astonishment, and an hissing, and perpetual desolations. Moreover I will take from them the voice of mirth and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the sound of the millstones, and the light of the candle. And this whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years. [JEREMIAH, 25. 8–11.]

The fears of Habbakuk and Jeremiah were now realized. Early in his reign, Nebuchadnezzar, who succeeded Nabopolassar on the throne of Babylon, came up against Jehoiakim, King of Judah, and his marauding bands overran the country during that king's reign. Jeremiah thus lamented the prospects of his country at this time.

I have forsaken mine house,
I have cast off mine heritage;
I have given the dearly beloved of my soul into the hand of her enemies.
Mine heritage is become unto me as a lion in the forest:
She hath uttered her voice against me;
Therefore I have hated her.
Is mine heritage unto me as a speckled bird of prey?

Are the birds of prey against her round about?
Go ye, assemble all the beasts of the field,
Bring them to devour.
Many shepherds have destroyed my vineyard,
They have trodden my portion under foot,
They have made my pleasant portion a desolate wilderness.
They have made it a desolation;
It mourneth unto me, being desolate;
The whole land is made desolate,
Because no man layeth it to heart.
Spoilers are come upon all the bare heights in the wilderness:
For the sword of the LORD devoureth from the one end of the land even to the other end of the land:
No flesh hath peace.
They have sown wheat, and have reaped thorns;
They have put themselves to pain, and profit nothing:
And ye shall be ashamed of your fruits,
Because of the fierce anger of the LORD.

Then said the LORD unto me, Though Moses and Samuel stood before me, yet my mind could not be toward this people: cast them out of my sight, and let them go forth. And it shall come to pass, when they say unto thee, Whither shall we go forth? then thou shalt tell them, Thus saith the LORD: Such as are for death, to death; and such as are for the sword, to the sword; and such as are for the famine, to the famine; and such as are for captivity, to captivity. And I will appoint over them four kinds, saith the LORD: the sword to slay, and the dogs to tear, and the fowls of the heaven, and the beasts of the earth, to devour and to destroy. And I will cause them to be tossed to and fro among all the kingdoms of the earth, because of Manasseh the son of Hezekiah king of Judah, for that which he did in Jerusalem.
For who shall have pity upon thee, O Jerusalem?
Or who shall bemoan thee?
Or who shall turn aside to ask of thy welfare?
Thou hast rejected me, saith the LORD,
Thou art gone backward:
Therefore have I stretched out my hand against thee, and destroyed thee;
I am weary with repenting.
And I have fanned them with a fan in the gates of the land;
I have bereaved them of children,
I have destroyed my people;
They have not returned from their ways.
Their widows are increased to me above the sand of the seas:
I have brought upon them against the mother of the young men a spoiler at noonday:

I have caused anguish and terrors to fall upon her suddenly.
She that hath borne seven languisheth;
She hath given up the ghost;
Her sun is gone down while it was yet day;
She hath been ashamed and confounded:
And the residue of them will I deliver to the sword before their enemies,
Saith the LORD. [*From* JEREMIAH, 12 and 15.]

Jeremiah denounces the greed and luxury of the king of Judah.

Woe unto him that buildeth his house by unrighteousness,
And his chambers by injustice;
That useth his neighbour's service without wages,
And giveth him not his hire;
That saith, I will build me a wide house and spacious chambers,
And cutteth him out windows;
And it is cieled with cedar,
And painted with vermilion.
Shalt thou reign, because thou strivest to excel in cedar?
Did not thy father eat and drink, and do judgement and justice?
Then it was well with him.
He judged the cause of the poor and needy;
Then it was well.
Was not this to know me?
Saith the LORD.
But thine eyes and thine heart are not but for thy covetousness,
And for to shed innocent blood, and for oppression, and for violence, to do it.
Therefore thus saith the LORD concerning Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah:
They shall not lament for him, saying,
Ah my brother! or, Ah sister!
They shall not lament for him, saying,
Ah lord! or, Ah his glory!
He shall be buried with the burial of an ass,
Drawn and cast forth beyond the gates of Jerusalem.
[JEREMIAH, 22. 13–19.]

The sins of the people are also denounced.

Behold, the LORD'S hand is not shortened, that it cannot save;
Neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear:
But your iniquities have separated between you and your God,
And your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.
For your hands are defiled with blood,
And your fingers with iniquity;
Your lips have spoken lies,
Your tongue muttereth wickedness.
None sueth in righteousness,

And none pleadeth in truth:
They trust in vanity, and speak lies;
They conceive mischief, and bring forth iniquity.
They hatch basilisks' eggs, and weave the spider's web:
He that eateth of their eggs dieth,
And that which is crushed breaketh out into a viper.
Their webs shall not become garments,
Neither shall they cover themselves with their works:
Their works are works of iniquity,
And the act of violence is in their hands.
Their feet run to evil,
And they make haste to shed innocent blood:
Their thoughts are thoughts of iniquity;
Desolation and destruction are in their paths.
The way of peace they know not;
And there is no judgement in their goings:
They have made them crooked paths;
Whosoever goeth therein doth not know peace.

[ISAIAH, 59. 1–8.[1]]

10. THE FIRST CAPTIVITY (597 B.C.)

Early in the reign of king Jehoiachin, Nebuchadnezzar, no longer content with partial measures, attacked Jerusalem itself and began the final destruction of the Kingdom.

At that time the servants of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up to Jerusalem, and the city was besieged. And Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came unto the city, while his servants were besieging it; and Jehoiachin the king of Judah went out to the king of Babylon, he, and his mother, and his servants, and his princes, and his officers: and the king of Babylon took him in the eighth year of his reign. And he carried out thence all the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king's house, and cut in pieces all the vessels of gold which Solomon king of Israel had made in the temple of the LORD, as the LORD had said. And he carried away all Jerusalem, and all the princes, and all the mighty men of valour, even ten thousand captives, and all the craftsmen and the smiths; none remained, save the poorest sort of the people of the land. And he carried away Jehoiachin to Babylon; and the king's mother, and the king's wives, and his officers, and the chief men of the land, carried he into captivity from Jerusalem to Babylon. And all the men of might, even seven thousand, and the craftsmen and the smiths a thousand, all of them strong and apt for war, even them the king of Babylon brought captive to Babylon. And the king of Babylon made Mattaniah his father's brother king in his stead, and changed his name to Zedekiah. [II KINGS, 24. 10–17.]

[1] I have accepted the view that this chapter belongs to the end of the monarchy, and has been inserted at this point in the book of Isaiah by a later editor of the Deutero-Isaiah.

Ezekiel mourns over the fate of the Royal House, Jehoahaz being taken captive to Egypt and Jehoiachin to Babylon.

Moreover, take thou up a lamentation for the princes of Israel,
and say,
What was thy mother?
A lioness: she couched among lions,
In the midst of the young lions she nourished her whelps.
And she brought up one of her whelps;
He became a young lion:
And he learned to catch the prey,
He devoured men.
The nations also heard of him;
He was taken in their pit:
And they brought him with hooks unto the land of Egypt.
Now when she saw that she had waited, and her hope was lost, then
she took another of her whelps, and made him a young lion.
And he went up and down among the lions,
He became a young lion:
And he learned to catch the prey,
He devoured men.
And he knew their palaces, and laid waste their cities;
And the land was desolate, and the fulness thereof, because of the
noise of his roaring.
Then the nations set against him on every side from the provinces:
And they spread their net over him;
He was taken in their pit.
And they put him in a cage with hooks,
And brought him to the king of Babylon;
They brought him into strong holds,
That his voice should no more be heard upon the mountains of
Israel. [EZEKIEL, 19. 1–9.]

Jeremiah writes from Jerusalem to the captives in Babylon advising them to settle down peaceably in their new home, and foretells the distress in prospect for those who remained in Jerusalem.

Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, unto all the captivity, whom I have caused to be carried away captive from Jerusalem unto Babylon: Build ye houses, and dwell in them; and plant gardens, and eat the fruit of them; take ye wives, and beget sons and daughters; and take wives for your sons, and give your daughters to husbands, that they may bear sons and daughters; and multiply ye there, and be not diminished. And seek the peace of the city whither I have caused you to be carried away captive, and pray unto the LORD for it: for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace.

For thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Let not your

prophets that be in the midst of you, and your diviners, deceive you, neither hearken ye to your dreams which ye cause to be dreamed. For they prophesy falsely unto you in my name: I have not sent them, saith the LORD.

For thus saith the LORD, After seventy years be accomplished for Babylon, I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place. For I know the thoughts that I think towards you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you hope in your latter end. And ye shall call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart. And I will be found of you, saith the LORD, and I will turn again your captivity, and I will gather you from all the nations, and from all the places whither I have driven you, saith the LORD; and I will bring you again unto the place whence I caused you to be carried away captive. For ye have said, The LORD hath raised us up prophets in Babylon.

For thus saith the LORD concerning the king that sitteth upon the throne of David, and concerning all the people that dwell in this city, your brethren that are not gone forth with you into captivity; thus saith the LORD of hosts: Behold, I will send upon them the sword, the famine, and the pestilence, and will make them like vile figs, that cannot be eaten, they are so bad. And I will pursue after them with the sword, with the famine, and with the pestilence, and will deliver them to be tossed to and fro among all the kingdoms of the earth, to be an execration, and an astonishment, and an hissing, and a reproach, among all the nations whither I have driven them: because they have not hearkened to my words, saith the LORD, wherewith I sent unto them my servants the prophets, rising up early and sending them; but ye would not hear, saith the LORD.

[JEREMIAH, 29. 4–19.]

After the fifth year of the captivity, Ezekiel, one of the Temple priests who was carried into captivity with Jehoiachin, began his mission to his fellow captives.

The call of Ezekiel

Now it came to pass in the thirtieth year, in the fourth month, in the fifth day of the month, as I was among the captives by the river Chebar, that the heavens were opened, and I saw visions of God. In the fifth day of the month, which was the fifth year of king Jehoiachin's captivity, the word of the LORD came expressly unto Ezekiel the priest, the son of Buzi, in the land of the Chaldeans by the river Chebar; and the hand of the LORD was there upon him.

And I looked, and, behold, a stormy wind came out of the north, a great cloud, with a fire infolding itself, and a brightness round about it, and out of the midst thereof as the colour of amber, out of the midst of the fire. And out of the midst thereof came the

likeness of four living creatures. And this was their appearance; they had the likeness of a man. And every one had four faces, and every one of them had four wings. And their feet were straight feet; and the sole of their feet was like the sole of a calf's foot: and they sparkled like the colour of burnished brass. And they had the hands of a man under their wings on their four sides: and they four had their faces and their wings thus; their wings were joined one to another; they turned not when they went; they went every one straight forward. As for the likeness of their faces, they had the face of a man; and they four had the face of a lion on the right side; and they four had the face of an ox on the left side; they four had also the face of an eagle. And their faces and their wings were separate above; two wings of every one were joined one to another, and two covered their bodies. And they went every one straight forward: whither the spirit was to go, they went; they turned not when they went. As for the likeness of the living creatures, their appearance was like burning coals of fire, like the appearance of torches; it went up and down among the living creatures: and the fire was bright, and out of the fire went forth lightning. And the living creatures ran and returned as the appearance of a flash of lightning.

Now as I beheld the living creatures, behold one wheel upon the earth beside the living creatures, for each of the four faces thereof. The appearance of the wheels and their work was like unto the colour of a beryl: and they four had one likeness: and their appearance and their work was as it were a wheel within a wheel. When they went, they went upon their four sides: they turned not when they went. As for their rings, they were high and dreadful; and they four had their rings full of eyes round about. And when the living creatures went, the wheels went beside them: and when the living creatures were lifted up from the earth, the wheels were lifted up. Whithersoever the spirit was to go, they went; thither was the spirit to go: and the wheels were lifted up beside them; for the spirit of the living creature was in the wheels. When those went, these went; and when those stood, these stood; and when those were lifted up from the earth, the wheels were lifted up beside them: for the spirit of the living creature was in the wheels.

And over the head of the living creature there was the likeness of a firmament, like the colour of the terrible crystal, stretched forth over their heads above. And under the firmament were their wings straight, the one toward the other: every one had two which covered on this side, and every one had two which covered on that side, their bodies. And when they went, I heard the noise of their wings like the noise of great waters, like the voice of the Almighty, a noise of tumult like the noise of an host: when they stood, they let down their wings. And there was a voice above the firmament that was over their heads: when they stood, they let down their wings. And

above the firmament that was over their heads was the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone: and upon the likeness of the throne was a likeness as the appearance of a man upon it above. And I saw as the colour of amber, as the appearance of fire within it round about, from the appearance of his loins and upward; and from the appearance of his loins and downward I saw as it were the appearance of fire, and there was brightness round about him. As the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud in the day of rain, so was the appearance of the brightness round about. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD. And when I saw it, I fell upon my face, and I heard a voice of one that spake.

And he said unto me, Son of man, stand upon thy feet, and I will speak with thee. And the spirit entered into me when he spake unto me, and set me upon my feet; and I heard him that spake unto me. And he said unto me, Son of man, I send thee to the children of Israel, to nations that are rebellious, which have rebelled against me: they and their fathers have transgressed against me, even unto this very day. And the children are impudent and stiffhearted; I do send thee unto them: and thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD. And they, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear, (for they are a rebellious house,) yet shall know that there hath been a prophet among them. And thou, son of man, be not afraid of them, neither be afraid of their words, though briers and thorns be with thee, and thou dost dwell among scorpions: be not afraid of their words, nor be dismayed at their looks, though they be a rebellious house. And thou shalt speak my words unto them, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear: for they are most rebellious. But thou, son of man, hear what I say unto thee; be not thou rebellious like that rebellious house: open thy mouth, and eat that I give thee.

And when I looked, behold, an hand was put forth unto me; and, lo, a roll of a book was therein; and he spread it before me; and it was written within and without: and there was written therein lamentations, and mourning, and woe.

And he said unto me, Son of man, eat that thou findest; eat this roll, and go, speak unto the house of Israel. So I opened my mouth, and he caused me to eat the roll. And he said unto me, Son of man, cause thy belly to eat, and fill thy bowels with this roll that I give thee. Then did I eat it; and it was in my mouth as honey for sweetness.

And he said unto me, Son of man, go, get thee unto the house of Israel, and speak with my words unto them. For thou art not sent to a people of a strange speech and of an hard language, but to the house of Israel; not to many peoples of a strange speech and of an hard language, whose words thou canst not understand. Surely, if I sent thee to them, they would hearken unto thee. But

the house of Israel will not hearken unto thee; for they will not hearken unto me: for all the house of Israel are of an hard forehead and of a stiff heart. Behold, I have made thy face hard against their faces, and thy forehead hard against their foreheads. As an adamant harder than flint have I made thy forehead: fear them not, neither be dismayed at their looks, though they be a rebellious house.

[EZEKIEL, 1 to 3. 11.]

Ezekiel in Babylonia describes the final judgement that is to fall on his country.

Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,
And thou, son of man, thus saith the Lord GOD unto the land of Israel,
An end:
The end is come upon the four corners of the land.
Now is the end upon thee,
And I will send mine anger upon thee,
And will judge thee according to thy ways;
And I will bring upon thee all thine abominations.
And mine eye shall not spare thee,
Neither will I have pity:
But I will bring thy ways upon thee,
And thine abominations shall be in the midst of thee:
And ye shall know that I am the LORD.

Thus saith the Lord GOD:
An evil,
An only evil;
Behold, it cometh.
An end is come,
The end is come,
It awaketh against thee;
Behold, it cometh.

Thy doom is come unto thee,
O inhabitant of the land:
The time is come,
The day is near;
A day of tumult,
And not of joyful shouting,
Upon the mountains.

Now will I shortly pour out my fury upon thee,
And accomplish mine anger against thee,
And will judge thee according to thy ways;
And I will bring upon thee all thine abominations.
And mine eye shall not spare,
Neither will I have pity:

I will bring upon thee according to thy ways,
And thine abominations shall be in the midst of thee;
And ye shall know that I the LORD do smite.

Behold, the day,
Behold, it cometh:
Thy doom is gone forth;
The rod hath blossomed,
Pride hath budded.

Violence is risen up into a rod of wickedness;
None of them shall remain,
Nor of their multitude, nor of their wealth:
Neither shall there be eminency among them.

The time is come,
The day draweth near:
Let not the buyer rejoice,
Nor the seller mourn:
For wrath is upon all the multitude thereof.

For the seller shall not return to that which is sold,
Although they be yet alive:
For the vision is touching the whole multitude thereof,
None shall return;
Neither shall any strengthen himself in the iniquity of his life.

They have blown the trumpet,
And have made all ready;
But none goeth to the battle:
For my wrath is upon all the multitude thereof.
The sword is without,
And the pestilence and the famine within:
He that is in the field shall die with the sword;
And he that is in the city, famine and pestilence shall devour him.

But they that escape of them shall escape,
And shall be on the mountains like doves of the valleys,
All of them mourning,
Every one in his iniquity.
All hands shall be feeble,
And all knees shall be weak as water.
They shall also gird themselves with sackcloth,
And horror shall cover them;
And shame shall be upon all faces,
And baldness upon all their heads.

They shall cast their silver in the streets,
And their gold shall be as an unclean thing;
Their silver and their gold shall not be able to deliver them in the day of the wrath of the LORD;
They shall not satisfy their souls,
Neither fill their bowels:
Because it hath been the stumblingblock of their iniquity.
As for the beauty of his ornament, he set it in majesty:
But they made the images of their abominations and their detestable things therein:
Therefore have I made it unto them as an unclean thing.
And I will give it into the hands of the strangers for a prey,
And to the wicked of the earth for a spoil;
And they shall profane it.
My face will I turn also from them,
And they shall profane my secret place:
And robbers shall enter into it, and profane it.

Make the chain:
For the land is full of bloody crimes,
And the city is full of violence.
Wherefore I will bring the worst of the heathen,
And they shall possess their houses:
I will also make the pride of the strong to cease;
And their holy places shall be profaned.
Destruction cometh;
And they shall seek peace,
And there shall be none.
Mischief shall come upon mischief,
And rumour shall be upon rumour;
And they shall seek a vision of the prophet;
But the law shall perish from the priest,
And counsel from the ancients.
The king shall mourn,
And the prince shall be clothed with desolation,
And the hands of the people of the land shall be troubled:
I will do unto them after their way,
And according to their deserts will I judge them;
And they shall know that I am the LORD.

And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,
Son of man, set thy face toward Jerusalem,
And drop thy word toward the sanctuaries,
And prophesy against the land of Israel;
And say to the land of Israel,
Thus saith the LORD:
Behold, I am against thee,

And will draw forth my sword out of its sheath,
And will cut off from thee the righteous and the wicked.
Seeing then that I will cut off from thee the righteous and the wicked,
Therefore shall my sword go forth out of its sheath against all flesh from the south to the north:
And all flesh shall know that I the LORD have drawn forth my sword out of its sheath;
It shall not return any more.
Sigh therefore, thou son of man;
With the breaking of thy loins and with bitterness shalt thou sigh before their eyes.
And it shall be, when they say unto thee, Wherefore sighest thou? that thou shalt say,
Because of the tidings, for it cometh:
And every heart shall melt,
And all hands shall be feeble,
And every spirit shall faint,
And all knees shall be weak as water:
Behold, it cometh,
And it shall be done, saith the Lord GOD.

And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,
Son of man, prophesy, and say,
Thus saith the LORD:
Say, A sword, a sword,
It is sharpened,
And also furbished:
It is sharpened that it may make a slaughter;
It is furbished that it may be as lightning:
Shall we then make mirth?
The rod of my son, it contemneth every tree.
And it is given to be furnished,
That it may be handled:
The sword, it is sharpened,
Yea, it is furbished,
To give it into the hand of the slayer.
Cry and howl, son of man:
For it is upon my people,
It is upon all the princes of Israel:
They are delivered over to the sword with my people:
Smite therefore upon thy thigh.
For there is a trial;
And what if even the rod that contemneth shall be no more?
Saith the Lord GOD.
Thou therefore, son of man, prophesy,
And smite thine hands together;

And let the sword be doubled the third time,
The sword of the deadly wounded:
It is the sword of the great one that is deadly wounded,
Which entereth into their chambers.
I have set the point of the sword against all their gates,
That their heart may melt,
And their stumblings be multiplied:
Ah! it is made as lightning,
It is pointed for slaughter.
Gather thee together,
Go to the right;
Set thyself in array,
Go to the left;
Whithersoever thy face is set.
I will also smite mine hands together,
And I will satisfy my fury:
I the LORD have spoken it.

The word of the LORD came unto me again, saying,
Also, thou son of man, appoint thee two ways,
That the sword of the king of Babylon may come;
They twain shall come forth out of one land:
And mark out a place,
Mark it out at the head of the way to the city.
Thou shalt appoint a way,
For the sword to come to Rabbah of the children of Ammon,
And to Judah in Jerusalem the defenced.
For the king of Babylon stood at the parting of the way,
At the head of the two ways,
To use divination:
He shook the arrows to and fro,
He consulted the teraphim,
He looked in the liver.
In his right hand was the divination for Jerusalem,
To set battering rams,
To open the mouth in the slaughter,
To lift up the voice with shouting,
To set battering rams against the gates,
To cast up mounts,
To build forts.
And it shall be unto them as a vain divination in their sight,
Which have sworn oaths unto them:
But he bringeth iniquity to remembrance,
That they may be taken.

Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD:
Because ye have made your iniquity to be remembered,
In that your transgressions are discovered,

So that in all your doings your sins do appear;
Because that ye are come to remembrance,
Ye shall be taken with the hand.
And thou, O deadly wounded wicked one, the prince of Israel,
Whose day is come, in the time of the iniquity of the end;
Thus saith the Lord GOD:
Remove the mitre, and take off the crown:
This shall be no more the same:
Exalt that which is low, and abase that which is high.
I will overturn, overturn, overturn it:
This also shall be no more,
Until he come whose right it is;
And I will give it him.

And thou, son of man, prophesy, and say,
Thus saith the Lord GOD concerning the children of Ammon, and concerning their reproach; and say thou,
A sword,
A sword is drawn,
For the slaughter it is furbished,
To cause it to devour,
That it may be as lightning:
Whiles they see vanity unto thee,
Whiles they divine lies unto thee,
To lay thee upon the necks of the wicked that are deadly wounded,
Whose day is come, in the time of the iniquity of the end.
Cause it to return into its sheath.
In the place where thou wast created,
In the land of thy birth, will I judge thee.
And I will pour out mine indignation upon thee;
I will blow upon thee with the fire of my wrath:
And I will deliver thee into the hand of brutish men, skilful to destroy.
Thou shalt be for fuel to the fire;
Thy blood shall be in the midst of the land;
Thou shalt be no more remembered:
For I the LORD have spoken it. [EZEKIEL, 7 and 21.]

Ezekiel announces a new view of divine justice.

The word of the LORD came unto me again, saying. What mean ye, that ye use this proverb concerning the land of Israel, saying,

The fathers have eaten sour grapes,
And the children's teeth are set on edge?

As I live, saith the Lord GOD, ye shall not have occasion any more to use this proverb in Israel. Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth, it shall die.

Yet say ye, Wherefore doth not the son bear the iniquity of the father? When the son hath done that which is lawful and right, and hath kept all my statutes, and hath done them, he shall surely live. The soul that sinneth, it shall die: the son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son; the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him. But if the wicked turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die. None of his transgressions that he hath committed shall be remembered against him: in his righteousness that he hath done he shall live. Have I any pleasure in the death of the wicked? saith the Lord GOD: and not rather that he should return from his way, and live? But when the righteous turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and doeth according to all the abominations that the wicked man doeth, shall he live? None of his righteous deeds that he hath done shall be remembered: in his trespass that he hath trespassed, and in his sin that he hath sinned, in them shall he die.

Yet ye say, The way of the Lord is not equal. Hear now, O house of Israel: Is not my way equal? are not your ways unequal? When the righteous man turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and dieth therein; in his iniquity that he hath done shall he die. Again, when the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness that he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive. Because he considereth, and turneth away from all his transgressions that he hath committed, he shall surely live, he shall not die. Yet saith the house of Israel, The way of the Lord is not equal. O house of Israel, are not my ways equal? are not your ways unequal? Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways, saith the Lord GOD. Return ye, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin. Cast away from you all your transgressions, wherein ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel? For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord GOD: wherefore turn yourselves, and live. [*From* EZEKIEL, 18.]

11. THE FINAL SIEGE AND FALL OF JERUSALEM, THE END OF THE KINGDOM OF JUDAH, AND THE BEGINNING OF THE GREAT CAPTIVITY (586 B.C.)

Zedekiah, king of Judah, hoping to get help from Egypt, decided, in the ninth year of his reign, to rebel against Nebuchadnezzar, who besieged him in Jerusalem. He asks Jeremiah what the issue will be.

The word which came unto Jeremiah from the LORD, when king Zedekiah sent unto him Pashhur the son of Malchijah, and

Zephaniah the son of Maaseiah the priest, saying, Inquire, I pray thee, of the LORD for us; for Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon maketh war against us: peradventure the LORD will deal with us according to all his wondrous works, that he may go up from us.

Then said Jeremiah unto them, Thus shall ye say to Zedekiah: Thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel, Behold, I will turn back the weapons of war that are in your hands, wherewith ye fight against the king of Babylon, and against the Chaldeans which besiege you, without the walls, and I will gather them into the midst of this city. And I myself will fight against you with an outstretched hand and with a strong arm, even in anger, and in fury, and in great wrath. And I will smite the inhabitants of this city, both man and beast: they shall die of a great pestilence. And afterward, saith the LORD, I will deliver Zedekiah king of Judah, and his servants, and the people, even such as are left in this city from the pestilence, from the sword, and from the famine, into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, and into the hand of their enemies, and into the hand of those that seek their life: and he shall smite them with the edge of the sword; he shall not spare them, neither have pity, nor have mercy. And unto this people thou shalt say, Thus saith the LORD: Behold, I set before you the way of life and the way of death. He that abideth in this city shall die by the sword, and by the famine, and by the pestilence: but he that goeth out, and falleth away to the Chaldeans that besiege you, he shall live, and his life shall be unto him for a prey. For I have set my face upon this city for evil, and not for good, saith the LORD: it shall be given into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall burn it with fire. [JEREMIAH, 21. 1–10.]

Ezekiel in Babylonia also denounces the folly of Zedekiah and his perfidy to Nebuchadnezzar.

And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Son of man, put forth a riddle, and speak a parable unto the house of Israel; and say, Thus saith the Lord GOD: A great eagle[1] with great wings and long pinions, full of feathers, which had divers colours, came unto Lebanon, and took the top of the cedar: he cropped off the topmost of the young twigs thereof, and carried it into a land of traffic; he set it in a city of merchants. He took also of the seed of the land, and planted it in a fruitful soil; he placed it beside many waters; he set it as a willow tree. And it grew, and became a spreading vine of low stature, whose branches turned toward him, and the roots thereof were under him: so it became a vine, and brought forth branches, and shot forth sprigs.

There was also another great eagle[2] with great wings and many feathers: and, behold, this vine did bend its roots towards him, and

[1] Nebuchadnezzar. [2] Pharaoh.

shot forth its branches toward him, from the beds of its plantation, that he might water it. It was planted in a good soil by many waters, that it might bring forth branches, and that it might bear fruit, that it might be a goodly vine. Say thou, Thus saith the Lord GOD: Shall it prosper? shall he not pull up the roots thereof, and cut off the fruit thereof, that it may wither; that all its fresh springing leaves may wither; even without great power or much people to pluck it up by the roots thereof? Yea, behold, being planted, shall it prosper? shall it not utterly wither, when the east wind toucheth it? it shall wither in the beds where it grew.

Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Say now to the rebellious house, Know ye not what these things mean? tell them, Behold, the king of Babylon came to Jerusalem, and took the king thereof, and the princes thereof, and brought them to him to Babylon; and he took of the seed royal, and made a covenant with him; he also brought him under an oath, and took away the mighty of the land: that the kingdom might be base, that it might not lift itself up, but that by keeping of his covenant it might stand. But he rebelled against him in sending his ambassadors into Egypt, that they might give him horses and much people. Shall he prosper? shall he escape that doeth such things? shall he break the covenant, and yet escape? As I live, saith the Lord GOD, surely in the place where the king dwelleth that made him king, whose oath he despised, and whose covenant he brake, even with him in the midst of Babylon he shall die. Neither shall Pharaoh with his mighty army and great company make for him in the war, when they cast up mounts and build forts, to cut off many persons. For he hath despised the oath by breaking the covenant; and behold, he had given his hand, and yet hath done all these things; he shall not escape. Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD: As I live, surely mine oath that he hath despised, and my covenant that he hath broken, I will even bring it upon his own head. And I will spread my net upon him, and he shall be taken in my snare, and I will bring him to Babylon, and will plead with him there for his trespass that he hath trespassed against me. And all his fugitives in all his bands shall fall by the sword, and they that remain shall be scattered toward every wind: and ye shall know that I the LORD have spoken it.

[EZEKIEL, 17. 1–21.]

Under the parable of a boiling cauldron, Ezekiel pictures Jerusalem in the miseries of her siege. The miserable people in Jerusalem shall be as the flesh and bones which are seethed and burnt in a cauldron.

Again, in the ninth year, in the tenth month, in the tenth day of the month, the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Son of man, write thee the name of the day, even of this selfsame day: the king of Babylon drew close unto Jerusalem this selfsame day. And utter

a parable unto the rebellious house, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD,

Set on the caldron, set it on,
And also pour water into it:
Gather the pieces thereof into it,
Even every good piece, the thigh, and the shoulder;
Fill it with the choice bones.
Take the choice of the flock,
And pile also the bones under it:
Make it boil well;
Yea, let the bones thereof be seethed in the midst of it.

Wherefore thus saith the Lord GOD:

Woe to the bloody city,
To the caldron whose rust is therein,
And whose rust is not gone out of it!
Bring it out piece by piece;
No lot is fallen upon it.
For her blood is in the midst of her;
She set it upon the bare rock;
She poured it not upon the ground, to cover it with dust;
That it might cause fury to come up to take vengeance,
I have set her blood upon the bare rock,
That it should not be covered.

Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD:

Woe to the bloody city!
I also will make the pile great.
Heap on the wood, make the fire hot,
Boil well the flesh, and make thick the broth,
And let the bones be burned.
Then set it empty upon the coals thereof,
That it may be hot, and the brass thereof may burn,
And that the filthiness of it may be molten in it,
That the rust of it may be consumed.
She hath wearied herself with toil:
Yet her great rust goeth not forth out of her;
Her rust goeth not forth by fire.
In thy filthiness is lewdness:
Because I have purged thee and thou wast not purged,
Thou shalt not be purged from thy filthiness any more,
Till I have satisfied my fury upon thee.
I the LORD have spoken it:
It shall come to pass, and I will do it;
I will not go back, neither will I spare, neither will I repent;
According to thy ways, and according to thy doings, shall they judge thee,
Saith the Lord God. [EZEKIEL, 24. 1–14.]

Jeremiah, at peril of his life, advised submission to Babylon, but Zedekiah was unable or unwilling to adopt this policy. After a year and a half's siege, the city fell.

So the city was besieged unto the eleventh year of king Zedekiah. On the ninth day of the fourth month the famine was sore in the city, so that there was no bread for the people of the land. Then a breach was made in the city, and all the men of war fled by night by the way of the gate between the two walls, which was by the king's garden: (now the Chaldeans were against the city round about:) and the king went by the way of the Arabah. But the army of the Chaldeans pursued after the king, and overtook him in the plains of Jericho: and all his army was scattered from him. Then they took the king, and carried him up unto the king of Babylon to Riblah; and they gave judgement upon him. And they slew the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes, and put out the eyes of Zedekiah, and bound him in fetters, and carried him to Babylon.

Now in the fifth month, on the seventh day of the month, which was the nineteenth year of king Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, came Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard, a servant of the king of Babylon, unto Jerusalem: and he burnt the house of the LORD, and the king's house; and all the houses of Jerusalem, even every great house, burnt he with fire. And all the army of the Chaldeans, that were with the captain of the guard, brake down the walls of Jerusalem round about. And the residue of the people that were left in the city, and those that fell away, that fell to the king of Babylon, and the residue of the multitude, did Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard carry away captive. But the captain of the guard left of the poorest of the land to be vinedressers and husbandmen. And the pillars of brass that were in the house of the LORD, and the bases and the brasen sea that were in the house of the LORD, did the Chaldeans break in pieces, and carried the brass of them to Babylon. And the pots, and the shovels, and the snuffers, and the spoons, and all the vessels of brass wherewith they ministered, took they away. And the firepans, and the basons; that which was of gold, in gold, and that which was of silver, in silver, the captain of the guard took away. The two pillars, the one sea, and the bases, which Solomon had made for the house of the LORD; the brass of all these vessels was without weight. The height of the one pillar was eighteen cubits, and a chapiter of brass was upon it: and the height of the chapiter was three cubits; with network and pomegranates upon the chapiter round about, all of brass: and like unto these had the second pillar with network. And the captain of the guard took Seraiah the chief priest, and Zephaniah the second priest, and the three keepers of the door: and out of the city he took an officer that was set over the men of war; and five men of them that saw the king's face, which were found in the city; and

the scribe, the captain of the host, which mustered the people of the land; and threescore men of the people of the land, that were found in the city. And Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard took them, and brought them to the king of Babylon to Riblah. And the king of Babylon smote them, and put them to death at Riblah in the land of Hamath. So Judah was carried away captive out of his land. [II KINGS, 25. 3–21.]

Thus ended the Kingdom of Judah and began the great Babylonian Captivity.

VI

THE BABYLONIAN CAPTIVITY

(From the fall of Jerusalem, 586 B.C. to the capture of Babylon by Cyrus and the Persians, 539 B.C.)

1. THE CRY OF THE EXILES

BY the waters of Babylon we sat down and wept,
When we remembered thee, O Sion.
As for our harps, we hanged them up
Upon the trees that are therein.
For they that led us away captive required of us then a song, and melody, in our heaviness,
Sing us one of the songs of Sion.
How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?
If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning.
If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth,
Yea, if I prefer not Jerusalem in my mirth.
Remember the children of Edom, O Lord, in the day of Jerusalem,
How they said, Down with it, down with it, even to the ground.

O daughter of Babylon, wasted with misery,
Yea, happy shall he be that rewardeth thee, as thou hast served us.
Blessed shall he be that taketh thy children,
And throweth them against the stones.

[PSALM 137, *Prayer Book Version.*]

2. EZEKIEL COMFORTS THE EXILES

Ezekiel denounces the corruption of the previous shepherds or rulers of Israel, and prophesies a restoration under the Divine Shepherd.

And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel, prophesy, and say unto them, even to the shepherds, Thus saith the Lord GOD:

Woe unto the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves!
Should not the shepherds feed the sheep?
Ye eat the fat, and ye clothe you with the wool, ye kill the fatlings;
But ye feed not the sheep.
The diseased have ye not strengthened,
Neither have ye healed that which was sick,
Neither have ye bound up that which was broken,
Neither have ye brought again that which was driven away,
Neither have ye sought that which was lost;

But with force and with rigour have ye ruled over them.
And they were scattered, because there was no shepherd:
And they became meat to all the beasts of the field, and were scattered.
My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and upon every high hill:
Yea, my sheep were scattered upon all the face of the earth;
And there was none that did search or seek after them.

Therefore, ye shepherds, hear the word of the LORD:
As I live, saith the Lord GOD,
Surely forasmuch as my sheep became a prey,
And my sheep became meat to all the beasts of the field,
Because there was no shepherd, neither did my shepherds search for my sheep,
But the shepherds fed themselves, and fed not my sheep;
Therefore, ye shepherds, hear the word of the LORD;
Thus saith the Lord GOD:
Behold, I am against the shepherds;
And I will require my sheep at their hand,
And cause them to cease from feeding the sheep;
Neither shall the shepherds feed themselves any more;
And I will deliver my sheep from their mouth,
That they may not be meat for them.

For thus saith the Lord GOD:
Behold, I myself, even I, will search for my sheep, and will seek them out.
As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered abroad, so will I seek out my sheep;
And I will deliver them out of all places whither they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day.
And I will bring them out from the peoples, and gather them from the countries, and will bring them into their own land;
And I will feed them upon the mountains of Israel, by the watercourses, and in all the inhabited places of the country.
I will feed them with good pasture,
And upon the mountains of the height of Israel shall their fold be:
There shall they lie down in a good fold,
And on fat pasture shall they feed upon the mountains of Israel.
I myself will feed my sheep, and I will cause them to lie down, saith the Lord GOD.
I will seek that which was lost,
And will bring again that which was driven away,

And will bind up that which was broken,
And will strengthen that which was sick:
And the fat and the strong I will destroy;
I will feed them in judgement.

And as for you, O my flock, thus saith the Lord GOD:
Behold, I judge between cattle and cattle, as well the rams as the he-goats.
Seemeth it a small thing unto you to have fed upon the good pasture,
But ye must tread down with your feet the residue of your pasture?
And to have drunk of the clear waters,
But ye must foul the residue with your feet?
And as for my sheep, they eat that which ye have trodden with your feet,
And they drink that which ye have fouled with your feet.
Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD unto them:
Behold, I, even I, will judge between the fat cattle and the lean cattle.
Because ye thrust with side and with shoulder,
And push all the diseased with your horns,
Till ye have scattered them abroad;
Therefore will I save my flock,
And they shall no more be a prey;
And I will judge between cattle and cattle.
And I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David;
He shall feed them, and he shall be their shepherd.
And I the LORD will be their God, and my servant David prince among them;
I the LORD have spoken it.
And I will make with them a covenant of peace,
And will cause evil beasts to cease out of the land:
And they shall dwell securely in the wilderness,
And sleep in the woods.
And I will make them and the places round about my hill a blessing;
And I will cause the shower to come down in its season;
There shall be showers of blessing.
And the tree of the field shall yield its fruit,
And the earth shall yield her increase,
And they shall be secure in their land;
And they shall know that I am the LORD,
When I have broken the bars of their yoke,
And have delivered them out of the hand of those that served themselves of them.

And they shall no more be a prey to the heathen,
Neither shall the beast of the earth devour them;
But they shall dwell securely, and none shall make them afraid.
And I will raise up unto them a plantation for renown,
And they shall be no more consumed with famine in the land,
Neither bear the shame of the heathen any more.
And they shall know that I the LORD their God am with them,
And that they, the house of Israel, are my people,
Saith the Lord GOD.
And ye my sheep, the sheep of my pasture, are men,
And I am your God,
Saith the Lord GOD. [EZEKIEL, 34.]

The desolate places of Israel shall be restored.

Therefore say unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord GOD:

I will take you from among the nations,
And gather you out of all the countries,
And will bring you into your own land.
And I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean:
From all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you.
A new heart also will I give you,
And a new spirit will I put within you:
And I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh,
And I will give you an heart of flesh.
And I will put my spirit within you,
And cause you to walk in my statutes,
And ye shall keep my judgements, and do them.
And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers;
And ye shall be my people,
And I will be your God.
And I will save you from all your uncleannesses;
And I will call for the corn, and will multiply it,
And lay no famine upon you.
And I will multiply the fruit of the tree, and the increase of the field,
That ye shall receive no more the reproach of famine among the nations.
Then shall ye remember your evil ways, and your doings that were not good;
And ye shall loathe yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities and for your abominations.
Not for your sake do I this, saith the Lord GOD, be it known unto you:
Be ashamed and confounded for your ways, O house of Israel.

Thus saith the Lord GOD:

In the day that I cleanse you from all your iniquities,
I will cause the cities to be inhabited, and the waste places shall be builded.
And the land that was desolate shall be tilled,
Whereas it was a desolation in the sight of all that passed by.
And they shall say, This land that was desolate is become like the garden of Eden;
And the waste and desolate and ruined cities are fenced and inhabited.
Then the nations that are left round about you shall know that I the LORD have builded the ruined places, and planted that which was desolate:

I the LORD have spoken it, and I will do it.

Thus saith the Lord GOD:

For this moreover will I be inquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them;
I will increase them with men like a flock.
As the flock for sacrifice, as the flock of Jerusalem in her appointed feasts;
So shall the waste cities be filled with flocks of men:
And they shall know that I am the LORD.

[*From* EZEKIEL, 36.]

Ezekiel prophesies that the dry bones of Israel shall come to life again, and return to their own land.

The hand of the LORD was upon me, and he carried me out in the spirit of the LORD, and set me down in the midst of the valley; and it was full of bones; and he caused me to pass by them round about: and behold, there were very many in the open valley; and lo, they were very dry.

And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered, O Lord GOD, thou knowest. Again he said unto me, Prophesy over these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the LORD. Thus saith the Lord GOD unto these bones: Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live. And I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am the LORD.

So I prophesied as I was commanded: and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and behold an earthquake, and the bones came together, bone to his bone. And I beheld, and lo, there were sinews upon them, and flesh came up, and skin covered them above: but there was no breath in them.

Then said he unto me, Prophesy unto the wind, prophesy, son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord GOD: Come

from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live.

So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army.

Then he said unto me, Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel: behold, they say, Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are clean cut off. Therefore prophesy, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD: Behold, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, O my people; and I will bring you into the land of Israel. And ye shall know that I am the LORD, when I have opened your graves, and caused you to come up out of your graves, O my people. And I will put my spirit in you, and ye shall live, and I will place you in your own land: and ye shall know that I the LORD have spoken it, and performed it, saith the LORD. [EZEKIEL, 37. 1–14.]

Ezekiel prophesies that Jehovah will return to his Temple at Jerusalem, and that the Temple precincts will be sanctified again.

Afterward he brought me to the gate, even the gate that looketh toward the east: and behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east: and his voice was like the sound of many waters: and the earth shined with his glory. And it was according to the appearance of the vision which I saw, even according to the vision that I saw when I came to destroy the city; and the visions were like the vision that I saw by the river Chebar: and I fell upon my face. And the glory of the LORD came into the house by the way of the gate whose prospect is toward the east. And the spirit took me up, and brought me into the inner court; and behold, the glory of the LORD filled the house. And I heard one speaking unto me out of the house; and a man stood by me. And he said unto me, Son of man, this is the place of my throne, and the place of the soles of my feet, where I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel for ever: and the house of Israel shall no more defile my holy name, neither they, nor their kings, by their whoredom, and by the carcases of their kings in their high places; in their setting of their threshold by my threshold, and their door post beside my door post, and there was but the wall between me and them; and they have defiled my holy name by their abominations which they have committed: wherefore I have consumed them in mine anger. Now let them put away their whoredom, and the carcases of their kings, far from me, and I will dwell in the midst of them for ever.

Thou, son of man, shew the house to the house of Israel, that they may be ashamed of their iniquities: and let them measure the pattern. And if they be ashamed of all that they have done, make known unto them the form of the house, and the fashion thereof,

and the goings out thereof, and the comings in thereof, and all the forms thereof, and all the ordinances thereof, and all the forms thereof, and all the laws thereof, and write it in their sight: that they may keep the whole form thereof, and all the ordinances thereof, and do them. This is the law of the house: upon the top of the mountain the whole limit thereof round about shall be most holy. Behold, this is the law of the house.

[EZEKIEL, 43. 1–12.]

From the Temple a stream of living waters shall issue.

And he brought me back unto the door of the house; and behold, waters issued out from under the threshold of the house eastward, for the forefront of the house was toward the east: and the waters came down from under, from the right side of the house, on the south of the altar. Then brought he me out by the way of the gate northward, and led me round by the way without unto the outer gate, by the way of the gate that looketh toward the east; and behold, there ran out waters on the right side. When the man went forth eastward with the line in his hand, he measured a thousand cubits, and he caused me to pass through the waters, waters that were to the ankles. Again he measured a thousand, and caused me to pass through the waters, waters that were to the knees. Again he measured a thousand, and caused me to pass through the waters, waters that were to the loins. Afterward he measured a thousand; and it was a river that I could not pass through: for the waters were risen, waters to swim in, a river that could not be passed through.

And he said unto me, Son of man, hast thou seen this? Then he brought me, and caused me to return to the bank of the river. Now when I had returned, behold, upon the bank of the river were very many trees on the one side and on the other. Then said he unto me, These waters issue forth toward the eastern region, and shall go down into the Arabah: and they shall go toward the sea; into the sea shall the waters go which were made to issue forth; and the waters shall be healed. And it shall come to pass, that every living creature which swarmeth, in every place whither the rivers come, shall live; and there shall be a very great multitude of fish: for these waters are come thither, and the waters of the sea shall be healed, and every thing shall live whithersoever the river cometh. And it shall come to pass, that fishers shall stand by it: from En-gedi even unto En-eglaim shall be a place for the spreading of nets; their fish shall be after their kinds, as the fish of the great sea, exceeding many. But the miry places thereof, and the marishes thereof, shall not be healed; they shall be given up to salt. And by the river upon the bank thereof, on this side and on that side, shall grow every tree for meat, whose leaf shall not wither, neither shall the fruit thereof fail: it shall bring forth new fruit every month, because

the waters thereof issue out of the sanctuary: and the fruit thereof shall be for meat, and the leaf thereof for healing.

[EZEKIEL, 47. 1–12.]

3. DEUTERO-ISAIAH AND JEREMIAH COMFORT THE EXILES

In 550 B. C. Cyrus the Great began his reign in Persia. He united the Medes and Persians who henceforth were known as one people, and he founded the empire which was to destroy that of Babylon and conquer the whole East. Deutero-Isaiah proclaims that Jehovah had raised him up as the deliverer of the Jews, and foretells the end of their dispersion and their return to their own country.

Cyrus has been raised up to punish the nations and restore Israel

(*Jehovah speaks*)

Keep silence before me, O islands;
And let the peoples renew their strength:
Let them come near; then let them speak:
Let us come near together to judgement.
Who hath raised up one from the east, whom he calleth in righteousness to his foot?
He giveth nations before him, and maketh him rule over kings;
He giveth them as the dust to his sword, as the driven stubble to his bow.
He pursueth them, and passeth on safely;
Even by a way that he had not gone with his feet.
Who hath wrought and done it, calling the generations from the beginning?
I the LORD, the first, and with the last, I am he.

But thou, Israel, my servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, the seed of Abraham my friend;
Thou whom I have taken hold of from the ends of the earth, and called thee from the corners thereof, and said unto thee, Thou art my servant, I have chosen thee and not cast thee away;
Fear thou not, for I am with thee;
Be not dismayed, for I am thy God:
I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee;
Yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.

Thus saith the LORD, thy redeemer, and he that formed thee from the womb:
I am the LORD, that maketh all things;
That stretcheth forth the heavens alone;
That spreadeth abroad the earth; who is with me?
That frustrateth the tokens of the liars,

And maketh diviners mad;
That turneth wise men backward,
And maketh their knowledge foolish:
That confirmeth the word of his servant,
And performeth the counsel of his messengers;
That saith of Jerusalem, She shall be inhabited;
And of the cities of Judah, They shall be built,
And I will raise up the waste places thereof:
That saith to the deep, Be dry, and I will dry up thy rivers:
That saith of Cyrus, He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure:
Even saying of Jerusalem, She shall be built;
And to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid.

Thus saith the LORD to his anointed,
To Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden,
To subdue nations before him,
And I will loose the loins of kings;
To open the doors before him,
And the gates shall not be shut;
I will go before thee, and make the rugged places plain:
I will break in pieces the doors of brass,
And cut in sunder the bars of iron:
And I will give thee the treasures of darkness,
And hidden riches of secret places,
That thou mayest know that I am the LORD,
Which call thee by thy name, even the God of Israel.
For Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel my chosen,
I have called thee by thy name:
I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me.
I am the LORD, and there is none else;
Beside me there is no God:
I will gird thee, though thou hast not known me:
That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west,
That there is none beside me:
I am the LORD, and there is none else.
I form the light, and create darkness;
I make peace, and create evil;
I am the LORD, that doeth all these things.

[*From* ISAIAH, 41, 44, 45.]

The Lord's Servant

Israel, the Lord's Servant, is called for the future deliverance of his people and of the Gentiles.

(*Jehovah speaks*)

Behold my servant, whom I uphold;
My chosen, in whom my soul delighteth:

I have put my spirit upon him;
He shall bring forth judgement to the Gentiles.
He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street.
A bruised reed shall he not break,
And the smoking flax shall he not quench:
He shall bring forth judgement in truth.
He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgement in the earth;
And the isles shall wait for his law.

(*The Servant speaks*)

Listen, O isles, unto me;
And hearken, ye peoples, from far:
The LORD hath called me from the womb;
From the bowels of my mother hath he made mention of my name:
And he hath made my mouth like a sharp sword,
In the shadow of his hand hath he hid me;
And he hath made me a polished shaft,
In his quiver hath he kept me close:
And he said unto me, Thou art my servant;
Israel, in whom I will be glorified. [*From* ISAIAH, 42 and 49.]

For a while the Servant must suffer deep humiliation; but this will be followed by deliverance and prosperity.

Behold, my servant shall deal wisely,
He shall be exalted and lifted up, and shall be very high.
Like as many were astonied at thee,
(His visage was so marred more than any man,
And his form more than the sons of men),
So shall he sprinkle many nations;
Kings shall shut their mouths at him:
For that which had not been told them shall they see;
And that which they had not heard shall they understand.

Who hath believed our report?
And to whom hath the arm of the LORD been revealed?
For he grew up before him as a tender plant,
And as a root out of a dry ground:
He hath no form nor comeliness;
And when we see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him.
He was despised, and rejected of men;
A man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief:
And as one from whom men hide their face he was despised,
And we esteemed him not.

Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows:
Yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.
But he was wounded for our transgressions,
He was bruised for our iniquities:
The chastisement of our peace was upon him;
And with his stripes we are healed.
All we like sheep have gone astray;
We have turned every one to his own way;
And the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

He was oppressed,
Yet he humbled himself and opened not his mouth;
As a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and as a sheep that before her shearers is dumb;
Yea, he opened not his mouth.
By oppression and judgement he was taken away;
And as for his generation, who among them considered that he was cut off out of the land of the living?
For the transgression of my people was he stricken.
And they made his grave with the wicked,
And with the rich in his death;
Although he had done no violence,
Neither was any deceit in his mouth.

Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him;
He hath put him to grief:
When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin,
He shall see his seed,
He shall prolong his days,
And the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.
He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied:
By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many:
And he shall bear their iniquities.
Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great,
And he shall divide the spoil with the strong;
Because he poured out his soul unto death,
And was numbered with the transgressors:
Yet he bare the sin of many,
And made intercession for the transgressors.

Thus saith the LORD, the redeemer of Israel, and his Holy One, to him whom man despiseth, to him whom the nation abhorreth, to a servant of rulers:
Kings shall see and arise;
Princes, and they shall worship;
Because of the LORD that is faithful,
Even the Holy One of Israel, who hath chosen thee.

Thus saith the Lord,
In an acceptable time have I answered thee,
And in a day of salvation have I helped thee:
And I will preserve thee,
And give thee for a covenant of the people,
To raise up the land,
To make them inherit the desolate heritages;
Saying to them that are bound, Go forth;
To them that are in darkness, Shew yourselves.
They shall feed in the ways,
And on all bare heights shall be their pasture.
They shall not hunger nor thirst;
Neither shall the heat nor sun smite them:
For he that hath mercy on them shall lead them,
Even by the springs of water shall he guide them.
And I will make all my mountains a way,
And my high ways shall be exalted.
Lo, these shall come from far:
And, lo, these from the north and from the west;
And these from the land of Sinim.

Sing, O heavens;
And be joyful, O earth;
And break forth into singing, O mountains:
For the LORD hath comforted his people,
And will have compassion upon his afflicted.

[*From* ISAIAH, 49, 52, 53.[1]]

Jerusalem shall stand up again

Awake, awake, stand up, O Jerusalem,
Which hast drunk at the hand of the LORD the cup of his fury;
Thou hast drunken the bowl of the cup of staggering, and drained it.
There is none to guide her among all the sons whom she hath brought forth;
Neither is there any that taketh her by the hand of all the sons that she hath brought up.
These two things are befallen thee;
Who shall bemoan thee?
Desolation and destruction, and the famine and the sword;
How shall I comfort thee?

Thy sons have fainted,
They lie at the top of all the streets, as an antelope in a net;
They are full of the fury of the LORD, the rebuke of thy God.
Therefore hear now this, thou afflicted, and drunken, but not with wine:

[1] For the Septuagint Version of Chapter 53 see Appendix I.

Thus saith thy Lord the LORD, and thy God that pleadeth the cause of his people,
Behold, I have taken out of thine hand the cup of staggering, even the bowl of the cup of my fury;
Thou shalt no more drink it again:
And I will put it into the hand of them that afflict thee;
Which have said to thy soul, Bow down, that we may go over:
And thou hast laid thy back as the ground, and as the street, to them that go over.

Awake, awake, put on thy strength, O Zion;
Put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city:
For henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean.
Shake thyself from the dust;
Arise, sit thee down, O Jerusalem:
Loose thyself from the bands of thy neck,
O captive daughter of Zion.

O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted,
Behold, I will set thy stones in fair colours,
And lay thy foundations with sapphires.
And I will make thy pinnacles of rubies,
And thy gates of carbuncles,
And all thy border of pleasant stones.

[*From* ISAIAH, 51, 52, 54.]

Babylon shall be destroyed

Declare ye among the nations
And publish, and set up a standard;
Publish, and conceal not:
Say, Babylon is taken,
Bel is put to shame,
Merodach is dismayed;
Her images are put to shame,
Her idols are dismayed.
For out of the north there cometh up a nation against her,
Which shall make her land desolate,
And none shall dwell therein:
They are fled,
They are gone,
Both man and beast.
For, lo, I will stir up and cause to come up against Babylon an assembly of great nations from the north country:
And they shall set themselves in array against her;
From thence she shall be taken:
Their arrows shall be as of an expert mighty man;
None shall return in vain.

And Chaldea shall be a spoil:
All that spoil her shall be satisfied,
Saith the LORD.
Because ye are glad, because ye rejoice,
O ye that plunder mine heritage,
Because ye are wanton as an heifer that treadeth out the corn,
And neigh as strong horses;
Your mother shall be sore ashamed;
She that bare you shall be confounded:
Behold, she shall be the hindermost of the nations,
A wilderness, a dry land, and a desert.
Because of the wrath of the LORD it shall not be inhabited,
But it shall be wholly desolate:
Every one that goeth by Babylon shall be astonished,
And hiss at all her plagues.

Set yourselves in array against Babylon round about, all ye that bend the bow;
Shoot at her, spare no arrows:
For she hath sinned against the LORD.
Shout against her round about;
She hath submitted herself;
Her bulwarks are fallen,
Her walls are thrown down:
For it is the vengeance of the LORD;
Take vengeance upon her;
As she hath done, do unto her.
Cut off the sower from Babylon,
And him that handleth the sickle in the time of harvest:
For fear of the oppressing sword they shall turn every one to his people,
And they shall flee every one to his own land.
Israel is a scattered sheep;
The lions have driven him away:
First the king of Assyria hath devoured him;
And last this Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon hath broken his bones.

A sound of battle is in the land,
And of great destruction.
How is the hammer of the whole earth cut asunder and broken!
How is Babylon become a desolation among the nations!
I have laid a snare for thee,
And thou art also taken, O Babylon,
And thou wast not aware:
Thou art found, and also caught,
Because thou hast striven against the LORD.

A sword is upon the Chaldeans, saith the LORD,
And upon the inhabitants of Babylon,
And upon her princes,
And upon her wise men.
A sword is upon the boasters,
And they shall dote:
A sword is upon her mighty men,
And they shall be dismayed.
A sword is upon their horses, and upon their chariots,
And upon all the mingled people that are in the midst of her,
And they shall become as women:
A sword is upon her treasures,
And they shall be robbed.

A drought is upon her waters,
And they shall be dried up:
For it is a land of graven images,
And they are mad upon idols.
Therefore the wild beasts of the desert with the wolves shall dwell there,
And the ostriches shall dwell therein:
And it shall be no more inhabited for ever;
Neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation.
As when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah and the neighbour cities thereof, saith the LORD;
So shall no man dwell there,
Neither shall any son of man sojourn therein.

Behold a people cometh from the north;
And a great nation, and many kings shall be stirred up from the uttermost parts of the earth.
They lay hold on bow and spear;
They are cruel, and have no mercy;
Their voice roareth like the sea,
And they ride upon horses;
Every one set in array, as a man to the battle,
Against thee, O daughter of Babylon.
The king of Babylon hath heard the fame of them,
And his hands wax feeble:
Anguish hath taken hold of him,
And pangs as of a woman in travail.

Make sharp the arrows;
Hold firm the shields:
The LORD hath stirred up the spirit of the kings of the Medes;
Because his device is against Babylon, to destroy it:
For it is the vengeance of the LORD,

The vengeance of his temple.
Set up a standard against the walls of Babylon,
Make the watch strong,
Set the watchmen,
Prepare the ambushes:
For the LORD hath both devised and done that which he spake concerning the inhabitants of Babylon.
O thou that dwellest upon many waters,
Abundant in treasures,
Thine end is come,
The measure of thy covetousness.

Set ye up a standard in the land,
Blow the trumpet among the nations,
Prepare the nations against her,
Call together against her the kingdoms of Ararat, Minni, and Ashkenaz:
Appoint a marshal against her;
Cause the horses to come up as the rough cankerworm.
Prepare against her the nations,
The kings of the Medes, the governors thereof,
And all the deputies thereof, and all the land of his dominion.
And the land trembleth and is in pain:
For the purposes of the LORD against Babylon do stand,
To make the land of Babylon a desolation, without inhabitant.
The mighty men of Babylon have forborne to fight,
They remain in their strong holds;
Their might hath failed;
They are become as women:
Her dwelling places are set on fire;
Her bars are broken.
One post shall run to meet another,
And one messenger to meet another,
To shew the king of Babylon that his city is taken on every quarter:
And the passages are surprised,
And the reeds they have burned with fire,
And the men of war are affrighted.
For thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel:
The daughter of Babylon is like a threshing-floor at the time when it is trodden;
Yet a little while, and the time of harvest shall come to her.

How is Sheshach taken!
And the praise of the whole earth surprised!
How is Babylon become a desolation among the nations!
The sea is come up upon Babylon:
She is covered with the multitude of the waves thereof.

Her cities are become a desolation,
A dry land, and a desert,
A land wherein no man dwelleth,
Neither doth any son of man pass thereby.

The sound of a cry from Babylon,
And of great destruction from the land of the Chaldeans!
For the LORD spoileth Babylon,
And destroyeth out of her the great voice;
And their waves roar like many waters,
The noise of their voice is uttered:
For the spoiler is come upon her, even upon Babylon,
And her mighty men are taken,
Their bows are broken in pieces:
For the LORD is a God of recompences,
He shall surely requite.
And I will make drunk her princes and her wise men, her governors and her deputies, and her mighty men;
And they shall sleep a perpetual sleep, and not wake,
Saith the King, whose name is the LORD of hosts.

[*From* JEREMIAH, 50 and 51.]

Vision of the capture of Babylon by the Medes

Set ye up an ensign upon the bare mountain,
Lift up the voice unto them,
Wave the hand,
That they may go into the gates of the nobles.
I have commanded my consecrated ones,
Yea, I have called my mighty men for mine anger,
Even my proudly exulting ones.
The noise of a multitude in the mountains,
Like as of a great people!
The noise of a tumult of the kingdoms of the nations gathered together!
The LORD of hosts mustereth the host for the battle.
They come from a far country,
From the uttermost part of heaven,
Even the LORD, and the weapons of his indignation,
To destroy the whole land.

Howl ye; for the day of the LORD is at hand;
As destruction from the Almighty shall it come.
Therefore shall all hands be feeble,
And every heart of man shall melt:
And they shall be dismayed;

Pangs and sorrows shall take hold of them;
They shall be in pain as a woman in travail:
They shall be amazed one at another;
Their faces shall be faces of flame.
Behold, the day of the LORD cometh,
Cruel, with wrath and fierce anger;
To make the land a desolation,
And to destroy the sinners thereof out of it.
For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light:
The sun shall be darkened in his going forth,
And the moon shall not cause her light to shine.
And I will punish the world for their evil,
And the wicked for their iniquity;
And I will cause the arrogancy of the proud to cease,
And will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible.
I will make a man more rare than fine gold,
Even a man than the pure gold of Ophir.
Therefore I will make the heavens to tremble,
And the earth shall be shaken out of her place,
In the wrath of the LORD of hosts, and in the day of his fierce anger.
And it shall come to pass, that as the chased roe,
And as sheep that no man gathereth,
They shall turn every man to his own people,
And shall flee every man to his own land.
Every one that is found shall be thrust through;
And every one that is taken shall fall by the sword.
Their infants also shall be dashed in pieces before their eyes;
Their houses shall be spoiled,
And their wives ravished.
Behold, I will stir up the Medes against them,
Which shall not regard silver,
And as for gold, they shall not delight in it.
And their bows shall dash the young men in pieces;
And they shall have no pity on the fruit of the womb;
Their eye shall not spare children.
And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms,
The beauty of the Chaldeans' pride,
Shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah.
It shall never be inhabited,
Neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation:
Neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there;
Neither shall shepherds make their flocks to lie down there.
But wild beasts of the desert shall lie there;
And their houses shall be full of doleful creatures;
And ostriches shall dwell there,
And satyrs shall dance there.

And wolves shall cry in their castles,
And jackals in the pleasant palaces:
And her time is near to come,
And her days shall not be prolonged. [ISAIAH, 13.][1]

Prophetic songs of victory over Babylon

And it shall come to pass in the day that the LORD shall give thee rest from thy sorrow, and from thy trouble, and from the hard service wherein thou wast made to serve, that thou shalt take up this parable against the king of Babylon, and say,
How hath the oppressor ceased!
The golden city ceased!
The LORD hath broken the staff of the wicked,
The sceptre of the rulers;
That smote the peoples in wrath with a continual stroke,
That ruled the nations in anger,
With a persecution that none restrained.

The whole earth is at rest, and is quiet:
They break forth into singing.
Yea, the fir trees rejoice at thee,
And the cedars of Lebanon, saying,
Since thou art laid down,
No feller is come up against us.
Hell from beneath is moved for thee to meet thee at thy coming:
It stirreth up the dead for thee,
Even all the chief ones of the earth;
It hath raised up from their thrones all the kings of the nations.
All they shall answer and say unto thee,
Art thou also become weak as we?
Art thou become like unto us?
Thy pomp is brought down to hell,
And the noise of thy viols:
The worm is spread under thee,
And worms cover thee.
How art thou fallen from heaven,
O day star, son of the morning!
How art thou cut down to the ground,
Which didst lay low the nations!
And thou saidst in thine heart,
I will ascend into heaven,
I will exalt my throne above the stars of God:
And I will sit upon the mount of congregation,
In the uttermost parts of the north:
I will ascend above the heights of the clouds;

[1] This prophecy, though attributed to Isaiah, clearly belongs to the period of the exile.

I will be like the Most High.
Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell,
To the uttermost parts of the pit.

They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee,
They shall consider thee, saying,
Is this the man that made the earth to tremble,
That did shake kingdoms;
That made the world as a wilderness,
And overthrew the cities thereof;
That let not loose his prisoners to their home?
All the kings of the nations, all of them, sleep in glory, every one in his own house.
But thou art cast forth away from thy sepulchre like an abominable branch,
Clothed with the slain, that are thrust through with the sword,
That go down to the stones of the pit;
As a carcase trodden under foot.
Thou shalt not be joined with them in burial,
Because thou hast destroyed thy land,
Thou hast slain thy people;
The seed of evil-doers shall not be named for ever.
Prepare ye slaughter for his children for the iniquity of their fathers;
That they rise not up, and possess the earth,
And fill the face of the world with cities.
And I will rise up against them, saith the LORD of hosts,
And cut off from Babylon name and remnant, and son and son's son,
Saith the LORD.
I will also make it a possession for the porcupine,
And pools of water:
And I will sweep it with the besom of destruction,
Saith the LORD of hosts. [*From* ISAIAH, 14.][1]

Another prophetic song of triumph over Babylon

Come down, and sit in the dust,
O virgin daughter of Babylon;
Sit on the ground without a throne,
O daughter of the Chaldeans:
For thou shalt no more be called tender and delicate.
Take the millstones, and grind meal:
Remove thy veil,
Strip off the train,

[1] This prophecy, though attributed to Isaiah, clearly belongs to the period of the exile.

Uncover the leg,
Pass through the rivers.
Thy nakedness shall be uncovered,
Yea, thy shame shall be seen:
I will take vengeance,
And will accept no man.
Our redeemer, the LORD of hosts is his name, the Holy One of Israel.
Sit thou silent, and get thee into darkness,
O daughter of the Chaldeans:
For thou shalt no more be called
The lady of kingdoms.
I was wroth with my people,
I profaned mine inheritance,
And gave them into thine hand:
Thou didst shew them no mercy;
Upon the aged hast thou very heavily laid thy yoke.
And thou saidst, I shall be a lady for ever:
So that thou didst not lay these things to thy heart,
Neither didst remember the latter end thereof.

Now therefore hear this,
Thou that art given to pleasures, that dwellest carelessly,
That sayest in thine heart, I am, and there is none else beside me;
I shall not sit as a widow,
Neither shall I know the loss of children:
But these two things shall come to thee in a moment in one day,
The loss of children, and widowhood:
In their full measure shall they come upon thee,
Despite of the multitude of thy sorceries,
And the great abundance of thine enchantments.
For thou hast trusted in thy wickedness;
Thou hast said, None seeth me;
Thy wisdom and thy knowledge, it hath perverted thee:
And thou hast said in thine heart, I am, and there is none else beside me.
Therefore shall evil come upon thee;
Thou shalt not know the dawning thereof:
And mischief shall fall upon thee;
Thou shalt not be able to put it away:
And desolation shall come upon thee suddenly, which thou knowest not.
Stand now with thine enchantments,
And with the multitude of thy sorceries,
Wherein thou hast laboured from thy youth;
If so be thou shalt be able to profit,
If so be thou mayest prevail.

Thou art wearied in the multitude of thy counsels:
Let now the astrologers, the stargazers, the monthly prognosticators,
stand up,
And save thee from the things that shall come upon thee.
Behold, they shall be as stubble;
The fire shall burn them;
They shall not deliver themselves from the power of the flame:
It shall not be a coal to warm at,
Nor a fire to sit before.
Thus shall the things be unto thee wherein thou hast laboured:
They that have trafficked with thee from thy youth shall wander
every one to his quarter;
There shall be none to save thee. [ISAIAH, 47.]

A cry of comfort for Jerusalem

The exiles are told that their iniquity is pardoned and that a highway is prepared for them on which Jehovah will lead them back from Babylon to Jerusalem.

Jehovah speaks

Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned; that she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins.

(*Voices carry on the tidings across the desert to Jerusalem*)

A voice of one crying

Prepare ye in the wilderness the way of the Lord,
Make straight in the desert a high way for our God.
Every valley shall be exalted.
And every mountain and hill shall be made low:
And the crooked shall be made straight,
And the rough places plain:
And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed,
And all flesh shall see it together:
For the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.

A second voice (*in the distance*)

Cry!

A despairing voice

What shall I cry?
All flesh is grass,
And all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field;
The grass withereth,
The flower fadeth,

Because the breath of the Lord bloweth upon it:
Surely the people is grass!

The second voice

The grass withereth,
The flower fadeth:
But the word of our God shall stand for ever.

Fourth voice (still more distant)

O thou that tellest good tidings to Zion,
Get thee up into the high mountain;
O thou that tellest good tidings to Jerusalem,
Lift up thy voice with strength;
Lift it up, be not afraid;
Say unto the cities of Judah, Behold, your God!

Fifth voice

Behold, the Lord God will come as a mighty one,
And his arm shall rule for him:
Behold, his reward is with him,
And his recompence before him.
He shall feed his flock like a shepherd,
He shall gather the lambs in his arm,
And carry them in his bosom,
And shall gently lead those that give suck.

[ISAIAH, 40. 1–11.][1]

The Power of Jehovah

Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand,
And meted out heaven with the span,
And comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure,
And weighed the mountains in scales,
And the hills in a balance?
Who hath directed the spirit of the LORD,
Or being his counsellor hath taught him?
With whom took he counsel,
And who instructed him, and taught him in the path of judgement,
And taught him knowledge, and shewed to him the way of understanding?
Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket,
And are counted as the small dust of the balance:
Behold he taketh up the isles as a very little thing.
And Lebanon is not sufficient to burn,
Nor the beasts thereof sufficient for a burnt offering.

[1] The above arrangement is taken from the Modern Reader's Bible.

All the nations are as nothing before him;
They are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity.

[ISAIAH, 40. 12–17.]

The vanity of idols

Thus saith the LORD, the King of Israel, and his redeemer the LORD of hosts: I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God. And who, as I, shall call, and shall declare it, and set it in order for me, since I appointed the ancient people? and the things that are coming, and that shall come to pass, let them declare. Fear ye not, neither be afraid: have I not declared unto thee of old, and shewed it? and ye are my witnesses. Is there a God beside me? yea, there is no Rock; I know not any.

They that fashion a graven image are all of them vanity; and their delectable things shall not profit: and their own witnesses see not, nor know; that they may be ashamed. Who hath fashioned a god, or molten a graven image that is profitable for nothing? Behold, all his fellows shall be ashamed; and the workmen, they are of men: let them all be gathered together, let them stand up; they shall fear, they shall be ashamed together. The smith maketh an axe, and worketh in the coals, and fashioneth it with hammers, and worketh it with his strong arm: yea, he is hungry, and his strength faileth; he drinketh no water, and is faint. The carpenter stretcheth out a line; he marketh it out with a pencil; he shapeth it with planes, and he marketh it out with the compasses, and shapeth it after the figure of a man, according to the beauty of a man, to dwell in the house. He heweth him down cedars, and taketh the holm tree and the oak, and strengtheneth for himself one among the trees of the forest: he planteth a fir tree, and the rain doth nourish it. Then shall it be for a man to burn; and he taketh thereof, and warmeth himself; yea, he kindleth it, and baketh bread: yea, he maketh a god, and worshippeth it; he maketh it a graven image, and falleth down thereto. He burneth part thereof in the fire; with part thereof he eateth flesh; he roasteth roast, and is satisfied: yea, he warmeth himself, and saith, Aha, I am warm, I have seen the fire: and the residue thereof he maketh a god, even his graven image: he falleth down unto it and worshippeth, and prayeth unto it, and saith, Deliver me; for thou art my god. They know not, neither do they consider: for he hath shut their eyes, that they cannot see; and their hearts, that they cannot understand. And none calleth to mind, neither is there knowledge nor understanding to say, I have burned part of it in the fire; yea, also I have baked bread upon the coals thereof; I have roasted flesh and eaten it: and shall I make the residue thereof an abomination? shall I fall down to the stock of a tree? He feedeth on ashes: a deceived heart hath turned him aside, that he cannot deliver his soul, nor say, Is there not a lie in my right hand?

[ISAIAH, 44. 6–20.]

Visions of the new Jerusalem

Vision of the return of the exiles to Jerusalem.

Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the LORD;
Awake, as in the days of old, the generations of ancient times.
Art thou not it that cut Rahab in pieces,
That pierced the dragon?
Art thou not it which dried up the sea, the waters of the great deep;
That made the depths of the sea a way for the redeemed to pass over?
And the ransomed of the LORD shall return,
And come with singing unto Zion;
And everlasting joy shall be upon their heads:
They shall obtain gladness and joy,
And sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings,
That publisheth peace,
That bringeth good tidings of good,
That publisheth salvation;
That saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!
The voice of thy watchmen!
They lift up the voice,
Together do they sing;
For they shall see, eye to eye,
When the LORD returneth to Zion.
Break forth into joy, sing together,
Ye waste places of Jerusalem:
For the LORD hath comforted his people,
He hath redeemed Jerusalem.
The LORD hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations;
And all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.

Thy children make haste, thy destroyers and they that made thee waste shall go forth of thee.
Lift up thine eyes round about, and behold:
All these gather themselves together, and come to thee.
As I live, saith the LORD, thou shalt surely clothe thee with them all as with an ornament,
And gird thyself with them, like a bride.
For, as for thy waste and thy desolate places and thy land that hath been destroyed,
Surely now shalt thou be too strait for the inhabitants,
And they that swallowed thee up shall be far away.
The children of thy bereavement shall yet say in thine ears,
The place is too strait for me:

Give place to me that I may dwell.
Then shalt thou say in thine heart,
Who hath begotten me these,
Seeing I have been bereaved of my children,
And am solitary, an exile, and wandering to and fro?
And who hath brought up these?
Behold, I was left alone;
These, where were they?

Thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I will lift up mine hand to the nations,
And set up my ensign to the peoples:
And they shall bring thy sons in their bosom,
And thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders.
And kings shall be thy nursing fathers,
And their queens thy nursing mothers:
They shall bow down to thee with their faces to the earth,
And lick the dust of thy feet;
And thou shalt know that I am the LORD,
And they that wait for me shall not be ashamed.
Shall the prey be taken from the mighty,
Or the lawful captives be delivered?
But thus saith the LORD,
Even the captives of the mighty shall be taken away,
And the prey of the terrible shall be delivered:
For I will contend with him that contendeth with thee,
And I will save thy children.
And I will feed them that oppress thee with their own flesh;
And they shall be drunken with their own blood, as with sweet wine:
And all flesh shall know that I the LORD am thy saviour, and thy redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob.

[*From* ISAIAH, 49, 51, and 52.]

The return to Jerusalem shall also be a return to the Lord.

Ho, every one that thirsteth,
Come ye to the waters,
And he that hath no money;
Come ye, buy, and eat;
Yea, come, buy wine and milk
Without money and without price.

Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread?
And your labour for that which satisfieth not?
Hearken diligently unto me,
And eat ye that which is good,
And let your soul delight itself in fatness.

Incline your ear, and come unto me;
Hear, and your soul shall live:
And I will make an everlasting covenant with you,
Even the sure mercies of David.

Behold, I have given him for a witness to the peoples,
A leader and commander to the peoples.
Behold, thou shalt call a nation that thou knowest not,
And a nation that knew not thee shall run unto thee,
Because of the LORD thy God,
And for the Holy One of Israel;
For he hath glorified thee.

Seek ye the LORD while he may be found,
Call ye upon him while he is near:
Let the wicked forsake his way,
And the unrighteous man his thoughts:
And let him return unto the LORD,
And he will have mercy upon him;
And to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

For my thoughts are not your thoughts,
Neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD.
For as the heavens are higher than the earth,
So are my ways higher than your ways,
And my thoughts than your thoughts.
For as the rain cometh down and the snow from heaven,
And returneth not thither, but watereth the earth,
And maketh it bring forth and bud,
And giveth seed to the sower and bread to the eater;
So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth:
It shall not return unto me void,
But it shall accomplish that which I please,
And it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.

For ye shall go out with joy,
And be led forth with peace:
The mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing,
And all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.
Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree,
And instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree:
And it shall be to the LORD for a name,
For an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off. [ISAIAH, 55.[1]]

The new Jerusalem shall be as a light out of darkness, enriched and beautified by the Gentiles.

Arise, shine; for thy light is come,
And the glory of the LORD is risen upon thee.

[1] For the Vulgate version of this Chapter, See Appendix II.

For, behold, darkness shall cover the earth,
And gross darkness the peoples:
But the LORD shall arise upon thee,
And his glory shall be seen upon thee.
And nations shall come to thy light,
And kings to the brightness of thy rising.
Lift up thine eyes round about, and see:
They all gather themselves together, they come to thee:
Thy sons shall come from far,
And thy daughters shall be carried in the arms.
Then thou shalt see and be lightened,
And thine heart shall tremble and be enlarged;
Because the abundance of the sea shall be turned unto thee,
The wealth of the nations shall come unto thee.
The multitude of camels shall cover thee,
The dromedaries of Midian and Ephah;
They all shall come from Sheba:
They shall bring gold and frankincense,
And shall proclaim the praises of the LORD.
All the flocks of Kedar shall be gathered together unto thee,
The rams of Nebaioth shall minister unto thee;
They shall come up with acceptance on mine altar,
And I will glorify the house of my glory.
Who are these that fly as a cloud,
And as the doves to their windows?
Surely the isles shall wait for me,
And the ships of Tarshish first,
To bring thy sons from far,
Their silver and their gold with them,
For the name of the LORD thy God,
And for the Holy One of Israel,
Because he hath glorified thee.
And strangers shall build up thy walls,
And their kings shall minister unto thee:
For in my wrath I smote thee,
But in my favour have I had mercy on thee.
Thy gates also shall be open continually;
They shall not be shut day nor night;
That men may bring unto thee the wealth of the nations,
And their kings led with them.
For that nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish;
Yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted.
The glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee,
The fir tree, the pine, and the box tree together;
To beautify the place of my sanctuary,
And I will make the place of my feet glorious.
And the sons of them that afflicted thee shall come bending unto thee;

And all they that despised thee shall bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet;
And they shall call thee The city of the LORD,
The Zion of the Holy One of Israel.
Whereas thou hast been forsaken and hated, so that no man passed through thee,
I will make thee an eternal excellency, a joy of many generations.
Thou shalt also suck the milk of the nations, and shalt suck the breast of kings:
And thou shalt know that I the LORD am thy saviour, and thy redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob.
For brass I will bring gold, and for iron I will bring silver,
And for wood brass, and for stones iron:
I will also make thy officers peace,
And thine exactors righteousness.
Violence shall no more be heard in thy land,
Desolation nor destruction within thy borders;
But thou shalt call thy walls Salvation,
And thy gates Praise.
The sun shall be no more thy light by day;
Neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee:
But the LORD shall be unto thee an everlasting light,
And thy God thy glory.
Thy sun shall no more go down,
Neither shall thy moon withdraw itself:
For the LORD shall be thine everlasting light,
And the days of thy mourning shall be ended.
Thy people also shall be all righteous,
They shall inherit the land for ever;
The branch of my planting, the work of my hands,
That I may be glorified.
The little one shall become a thousand,
And the small one a strong nation:
I the LORD will hasten it in its time. [ISAIAH, 60.]

The future happiness of Israel in a restored Zion.

The prophet[1] *speaks*

The spirit of the Lord God is upon me;
Because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek;
He hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,
To proclaim liberty to the captives,
And the opening of the prison to them that are bound;
To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD,
And the day of vengeance of our God;

[1] Or, according to some commentators, Jehovah's servant.

To comfort all that mourn;
To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion,
To give unto them a garland for ashes,
The oil of joy for mourning,
The garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness;
That they might be called trees of righteousness,
The planting of the LORD,
That he might be glorified.
And they shall build the old wastes,
They shall raise up the former desolations,
And they shall repair the waste cities,
The desolations of many generations.
And strangers shall stand and feed your flocks,
And aliens shall be your plowmen and your vinedressers.
But ye shall be named the priests of the LORD:
Men shall call you the ministers of our God:
Ye shall eat the wealth of the nations,
And in their glory shall ye boast yourselves.
For your shame ye shall have double;
And for confusion they shall rejoice in their portion:
Therefore in their land they shall possess double:
Everlasting joy shall be unto them.
For I the LORD love judgement,
I hate robbery with iniquity;
And I will give them their recompence in truth,
And I will make an everlasting covenant with them.
And their seed shall be known among the nations,
And their offspring among the peoples:
All that see them shall acknowledge them,
That they are the seed which the LORD hath blessed.

Zion replies

I will greatly rejoice in the LORD,
My soul shall be joyful in my God;
For he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation,
He hath covered me with the robe of righteousness,
As a bridegroom decketh himself with a garland,
And as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels.
For as the earth bringeth forth her bud,
And as the garden causeth the things that are sown in it to spring forth;
So the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations.

The Prophet resumes

For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace,
And for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest,

Until her righteousness go forth as brightness,
And her salvation as a lamp that burneth.
And the nations shall see thy righteousness,
And all kings thy glory:
And thou shalt be called by a new name,
Which the mouth of the LORD shall name.
Thou shalt also be a crown of beauty in the hand of the LORD,
And a royal diadem in the hand of thy God.
Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken;
Neither shall thy land any more be termed Desolate:
But thou shalt be called Hephzi-bah,
And thy land Beulah:
For the LORD delighteth in thee,
And thy land shall be married.
For as a young man marrieth a virgin,
So shall thy sons marry thee:
And as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride,
So shall thy God rejoice over thee.

I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem;
They shall never hold their peace day nor night:
Ye that are the LORD'S remembrancers,
Take ye no rest,
And give him no rest,
Till he establish, and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth.
The LORD hath sworn by his right hand,
And by the arm of his strength,
Surely I will no more give thy corn to be meat for thine enemies;
And strangers shall not drink thy wine, for the which thou hast laboured:
But they that have garnered it shall eat it, and praise the LORD;
And they that have gathered it shall drink it in the courts of my sanctuary.

Go through, go through the gates;
Prepare ye the way of the people;
Cast up, cast up the high way;
Gather out the stones;
Lift up an ensign for the peoples.
Behold, the LORD hath proclaimed unto the end of the earth,
Say ye to the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy salvation cometh;
Behold, his reward is with him, and his recompence before him.
And they shall call them The holy people,
The redeemed of the LORD:
And thou shalt be called Sought out,
A city not forsaken.

[ISAIAH, 61 and 62.]

4. THE CAPTURE OF BABYLON BY THE MEDES AND PERSIANS

In 539 Cyrus took Babylon and destroyed the empire that had so long oppressed the Jews.

Belshazzar the king[1] made a great feast to a thousand of his lords, and drank wine before the thousand. Belshazzar, whiles he tasted the wine, commanded to bring the golden and silver vessels which Nebuchadnezzar his father had taken out of the temple which was in Jerusalem; that the king and his lords, his wives and his concubines, might drink therein. Then they brought the golden vessels that were taken out of the temple of the house of God which was at Jerusalem; and the king and his lords, his wives and his concubines, drank in them. They drank wine, and praised the gods of gold, and of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, and of stone. In the same hour came forth the fingers of a man's hand, and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaister of the wall of the king's palace: and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote. Then the king's countenance was changed in him, and his thoughts troubled him; and the joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees smote one against another. The king cried aloud to bring in the enchanters, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers. The king spake and said to the wise men of Babylon, Whosoever shall read this writing, and shew me the interpretation thereof, shall be clothed with purple, and have a chain of gold about his neck, and shall be the third ruler in the kingdom. Then came in all the king's wise men: but they could not read the writing, nor make known to the king the interpretation. Then was king Belshazzar greatly troubled, and his countenance was changed in him, and his lords were perplexed. Now the queen by reason of the words of the king and his lords came into the banquet house: the queen spake and said, O king, live for ever; let not thy thoughts trouble thee, nor let thy countenance be changed: there is a man in thy kingdom, in whom is the spirit of the holy gods; and in the days of thy father light and understanding and wisdom, like the wisdom of the gods, was found in him: and the king Nebuchadnezzar thy father, the king, I say, thy father, made him master of the magicians, enchanters, Chaldeans, and soothsayers; forasmuch as an excellent spirit, and knowledge, and understanding, interpreting of dreams, and shewing of dark sentences, and dissolving of doubts, were found in the same Daniel, whom the king named Belteshazzar. Now let Daniel be called, and he will shew the interpretation.

Then was Daniel brought in before the king. The king spake and said unto Daniel, Art thou that Daniel, which art of the children of the captivity of Judah, whom the king my father brought out of Judah? I have heard of thee, that the spirit of the gods is in

[1] i. e., of Babylon. But see Note D, at the end of this volume.

thee, and that light and understanding and excellent wisdom is found in thee. And now the wise men, the enchanters, have been brought in before me, that they should read this writing, and make known unto me the interpretation thereof: but they could not shew the interpretation of the thing. But I have heard of thee, that thou canst give interpretations, and dissolve doubts: now if thou canst read the writing, and make known to me the interpretation thereof, thou shalt be clothed with purple, and have a chain of gold about thy neck, and shalt be the third ruler in the kingdom. Then Daniel answered and said before the king, Let thy gifts be to thyself, and give thy rewards to another; nevertheless I will read the writing unto the king, and make known to him the interpretation. O thou king, the Most High God gave Nebuchadnezzar thy father the kingdom, and greatness, and glory, and majesty: and because of the greatness that he gave him, all the peoples, nations, and languages trembled and feared before him: whom he would he slew, and whom he would he kept alive; and whom he would he raised up, and whom he would he put down. But when his heart was lifted up, and his spirit was hardened that he dealt proudly, he was deposed from his kingly throne, and they took his glory from him: and he was driven from the sons of men; and his heart was made like the beasts, and his dwelling was with the wild asses; he was fed with grass like oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven: until he knew that the Most High God ruleth in the kingdom of men, and that he setteth up over it whomsoever he will. And thou his son, O Belshazzar, hast not humbled thine heart, though thou knewest all this; but hast lifted up thyself against the Lord of heaven; and they have brought the vessels of his house before thee, and thou and thy lords, thy wives and thy concubines, have drunk wine in them; and thou hast praised the gods of silver, and gold, of brass, iron, wood, and stone, which see not, nor hear, nor know: and the God in whose hand thy breath is, and whose are all thy ways, hast thou not glorified: then was the part of the hand sent from before him, and this writing was inscribed. And this is the writing that was inscribed, MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN. This is the interpretation of the thing:[1]

MENE
God hath numbered thy kingdom,
And brought it to an end!

TEKEL
Thou art weighed in the balances,
And art found wanting!

[1] It seems to be generally accepted that in the original version of the passage the words on the wall were the names of weights and that Daniel interpreted their meaning by a series of plays upon words, perceiving the hidden allusions which escaped the soothsayers,

PERES
Thy kingdom is divided,
And given to the Medes and Persians.

Then commanded Belshazzar, and they clothed Daniel with purple, and put a chain of gold about his neck, and made proclamation concerning him, that he should be the third ruler in the kingdom.

In that night Belshazzar the Chaldean king was slain. And Darius the Mede received the kingdom, being about threescore and two years old.

[DANIEL, 5.]

VII

THE EXILES' RETURN

With the fall of Babylon a new era began in the oriental world. The Assyrians and the Babylonians had stood for a system of aggression and self-aggrandizement at once cruel and ruthless. Their political creed was 'Vae victis' and they carried out their wars in the spirit of slave-traders. When the Persians under Cyrus destroyed Babylon[1] *and became the ruling power in Asia, they introduced an entirely new concept of government. Their love of empire was no less than that of their predecessors; but they ceased to conquer other nations mainly to despoil them. As in the case of the Romans in a later age, their conquests were the prelude to order and civilized government.*

It was in accordance with this general policy that soon after the destruction of Babylon, Cyrus gave permission to the Jews of the Captivity to return to Jerusalem and rebuild their Temple. He even restored to them all the gold and silver vessels which Nebuchadnezzar had taken from the Temple. While, however, he allowed the Jews to return to their own country, there was no idea of restoring them to national independence. Their country became a Persian province, with the security against serious aggression involved in such a position, but also with none of the stimulus of liberty and patriotism.

The end of the Great Captivity therefore was in many ways as great a tragedy as the beginning. The captives had kept alive their ancient hopes. They remembered the promise to Abraham, the glory of Solomon, the centuries of independence under the line of David, while the Deutero-Isaiah's 'rhapsody of Zion Redeemed' still rang in their ears. It is not surprising if the stark realities awaiting them in Jerusalem led to a bitter disillusionment.

1. THE RETURN TO JERUSALEM (538 B.C.)

Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah might be accomplished, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying, Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, All the kingdoms of the earth hath the LORD, the God of heaven, given me; and he hath charged me to build him an house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Whosoever there is among you of all his people, his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and build the house of the LORD, the God of Israel, (he is God,) which is in Jerusalem. And whosoever is left, in any place where he sojourneth, let the men of his place help him with silver, and with gold, and with goods, and with beasts, beside the free-will offering for the house of God which is in Jerusalem. Then rose up the heads of fathers' houses of Judah and Benjamin, and the priests, and the

[1] See Note C at the end of this volume.

Levites, even all whose spirit God had stirred to go up to build the house of the LORD which is in Jerusalem. And all they that were round about them strengthened their hands with vessels of silver, with gold, with goods, and with beasts, and with precious things, beside all that was willingly offered. Also Cyrus the king brought forth the vessels of the house of the LORD, which Nebuchadnezzar had brought forth out of Jerusalem, and had put them in the house of his gods; even those did Cyrus king of Persia bring forth by the hand of Mithredath the treasurer, and numbered them unto Sheshbazzar, the prince of Judah. And this is the number of them: thirty chargers of gold, a thousand chargers of silver, nine and twenty knives; thirty bowls of gold, silver bowls of a second sort four hundred and ten, and other vessels a thousand. All the vessels of gold and of silver were five thousand and four hundred. All these did Sheshbazzar bring up, when they of the captivity were brought up from Babylon unto Jerusalem. [EZRA, 1.]

2. THE REBUILDING OF THE TEMPLE IS BEGUN (536 B. C.)

Now in the second year of their coming unto the house of God at Jerusalem, in the second month, began Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Jeshua the son of Jozadak, and the rest of their brethren the priests and the Levites, and all they that were come out of the captivity unto Jerusalem; and appointed the Levites, from twenty years old and upward, to have the oversight of the work of the house of the LORD. Then stood Jeshua with his sons and his brethren, Kadmiel and his sons, the sons of Judah, together, to have the oversight of the workmen in the house of God: the sons of Henadad, with their sons and their brethren the Levites. And when the builders laid the foundation of the temple of the LORD, they set the priests in their apparel with trumpets, and the Levites the sons of Asaph with cymbals, to praise the LORD, after the order of David king of Israel. And they sang one to another in praising and giving thanks unto the LORD, saying, For he is good, for his mercy endureth for ever toward Israel. And all the people shouted with a great shout, when they praised the LORD, because the foundation of the house of the LORD was laid. But many of the priests and Levites and heads of fathers' houses, the old men that had seen the first house, when the foundation of this house was laid before their eyes, wept with a loud voice; and many shouted aloud for joy: so that the people could not discern the noise of the shout of joy from the noise of the weeping of the people: for the people shouted with a loud shout, and the noise was heard afar off. [EZRA, 3. 10-end.]

3. DISILLUSIONMENT

The return, however, fell far short of the glories foretold by Deutero-Isaiah. The number of those who returned was small: they had to struggle against bad seasons and poor harvests; and they were hampered

at every stage by the Samaritans who were jealous at the idea of a restored Jerusalem. For sixteen years no progress was made with the rebuilding of the temple, and the prophet Haggai then tried to stir up the people to greater enthusiasm for the work, rebuking them for their apathy and worldliness.

In the second year of Darius[1] the king, in the sixth month, in the first day of the month, came the word of the LORD by Haggai the prophet unto Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, saying,
Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying,
This people say, It is not the time for us to come,
The time for the LORD's house to be built.
Then came the word of the LORD by Haggai the prophet, saying,
Is it a time for you yourselves to dwell in your cieled houses,
While this house lieth waste?
Now therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts:
Consider your ways.
Ye have sown much, and bring in little;
Ye eat, but ye have not enough;
Ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink;
Ye clothe you, but there is none warm;
And he that earneth wages earneth wages to put it into a bag with holes.
Thus saith the LORD of hosts:
Consider your ways.
Go up to the mountain, and bring wood, and build the house;
And I will take pleasure in it,
And I will be glorified,
Saith the LORD.
Ye looked for much, and, lo, it came to little;
And when ye brought it home, I did blow upon it.
Why? saith the LORD of hosts.
Because of mine house that lieth waste,
While ye run every man to his own house.
Therefore for your sake the heaven is stayed from dew,
And the earth is stayed from her fruit.
And I called for a drought upon the land, and upon the mountains, and upon the corn, and upon the wine, and upon the oil, and upon that which the ground bringeth forth, and upon men, and upon cattle, and upon all the labour of the hands.

Then Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, with all the remnant of the people, obeyed the voice of the LORD their God, and the words of Haggai the prophet, as the LORD their God had sent him; and the people did fear before the LORD. Then spake Haggai the LORD's messenger

[1] Darius, 521–485 B.C.

in the LORD's message unto the people, saying, I am with you, saith the LORD. And the LORD stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and the spirit of all the remnant of the people; and they came and did work in the house of the LORD of hosts, their God, in the four and twentieth day of the month, in the sixth month, in the second year of Darius the king.

[HAGGAI, 1.]

Zechariah also in a series of visions promises the help of Jehovah in restoring Jerusalem and the Temple.

Upon the four and twentieth day of the eleventh month, which is the month Shebat, in the second year of Darius, came the word of the LORD unto Zechariah the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo, the prophet, saying,

I saw in the night, and behold a man riding upon a red horse, and he stood among the myrtle trees that were in the bottom; and behind him there were horses, red, sorrel, and white.

Then said I, O my lord, what are these? And the angel that talked with me said unto me, I will shew thee what these be.

And the man that stood among the myrtle trees answered and said, These are they whom the LORD hath sent to walk to and fro through the earth.

And they answered the angel of the LORD that stood among the myrtle trees, and said, We have walked to and fro through the earth, and, behold, all the earth sitteth still, and is at rest.

Then the angel of the LORD answered and said, O LORD of hosts, how long wilt thou not have mercy on Jerusalem and on the cities of Judah, against which thou hast had indignation these threescore and ten years?

And the LORD answered the angel that talked with me with good words, even comfortable words.

So the angel that talked with me said unto me, Cry thou, saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts: I am jealous for Jerusalem and for Zion with a great jealousy. And I am very sore displeased with the nations that are at ease: for I was but a little displeased, and they helped forward the affliction.

Therefore thus saith the LORD: I am returned to Jerusalem with mercies; my house shall be built in it, saith the LORD of hosts, and a line shall be stretched forth over Jerusalem.

Cry yet again, saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts: My cities through prosperity shall yet be spread abroad; and the LORD shall yet comfort Zion, and shall yet choose Jerusalem.

[ZECHARIAH, 1. 1–17.]

Wickedness (under the symbol of a woman) shall be banished from Zion to Babylon, the land of evil.

Then the angel that talked with me went forth, and said unto me, Lift up now thine eyes, and see what is this that goeth forth. And I said, What is it? And he said, This is the ephah that goeth forth. He said moreover, This is their resemblance in all the land: (and behold, there was lifted up a talent of lead:) and this is a woman sitting in the midst of the ephah. And he said, This is Wickedness; and he cast her down into the midst of the ephah: and he cast the weight of lead upon the mouth thereof. Then lifted I up mine eyes, and saw, and behold, there came forth two women, and the wind was in their wings; now they had wings like the wings of a stork: and they lifted up the ephah between the earth and the heaven. Then said I to the angel that talked with me, Whither do these bear the ephah? And he said unto me, To build her an house in the land of Shinar: and when it is prepared, she shall be set there in her own place. [ZECHARIAH, 5, 5–end.]

The nations which troubled Israel will be punished.

And again I lifted up mine eyes, and saw, and behold, there came four chariots out from between two mountains; and the mountains were mountains of brass. In the first chariot were red horses; and in the second chariot black horses; and in the third chariot white horses; and in the fourth chariot grisled bay horses.

Then I answered and said unto the angel that talked with me, What are these, my lord?

And the angel answered and said unto me, These are the four winds of heaven, which go forth from standing before the Lord of all the earth. The chariot wherein are the black horses goeth forth toward the north country; and the white went forth after them; and the grisled went forth toward the south country.

And the bay went forth, and sought to go that they might walk to and fro through the earth: and he said, Get you hence, walk to and fro through the earth.

So they walked to and fro through the earth.

Then cried he upon me, and spake unto me, saying, Behold, they that go toward the north country have quieted my spirit in the north country. [ZECHARIAH, 6. 1–8.]

Happiness, however, shall yet come to Jerusalem.

And the word of the LORD of hosts came to me, saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts: I am jealous for Zion with great jealousy, and I am jealous for her with great fury. Thus saith the LORD: I am returned unto Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and Jerusalem shall be called The city of truth; and the mountain of the LORD of hosts The holy mountain. Thus saith the LORD of hosts: There shall yet old men and old women dwell in the streets of Jerusalem, every man with his staff in his hand for very age. And

the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof.

For thus saith the LORD of hosts: As I thought to do evil unto you, when your fathers provoked me to wrath, saith the LORD of hosts, and I repented not; so again have I thought in these days to do good unto Jerusalem and to the house of Judah: fear ye not. These are the things that ye shall do; Speak ye every man the truth with his neighbour; execute the judgement of truth and peace in your gates: and let none of you imagine evil in your hearts against his neighbour; and love no false oath: for all these are things that I hate, saith the LORD. [*From* ZECHARIAH, 8.]

Encouraged by Haggai and Zechariah the Temple was completed (516 B.C.) *and dedicated, though the city walls continued to lie waste.*

4. THE FOUNDING OF JUDAISM

After this there is a silence of half a century in the Old Testament story, broken neither by chronicler nor prophet. At the end of that period (458 B.C.)[1] *Ezra with some more refugees returned from Babylon to Jerusalem and set to work to revive the religious life of the community. In accordance with the inveterate habit of the Jews, they were becoming merged with neighbouring peoples and Ezra's mission was to enforce the strict observance of the Law and to protect the 'holy seed'. His reforms laid the foundation of Judaism.*

The way was prepared for him by the prophet Malachi who upbraided his countrymen for their wrong-doing and foretold the coming of Jehovah to purify the nation.

The warnings of Malachi

Ye have wearied the LORD with your words.
Yet ye say, Wherein have we wearied him?
In that ye say, Every one that doeth evil is good in the sight of the LORD, and he delighteth in them; or where is the God of judgement?

Behold, I send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me:
And the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple;
And the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in, behold, he cometh, saith the LORD of hosts.
But who may abide the day of his coming?
And who shall stand when he appeareth?
For he is like a refiner's fire, and like fuller's soap:

[1] i.e., in the seventh year of the reign of Artaxerxes I, 465–425 B.C. (Ezra, 7.7). But the chronology of the whole period, covered by the books of Ezra and Nehemiah is complicated and open to doubt. For a list of the Persian kings and their dates, see Note C at the end of this volume.

And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver,
And he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver;
And they shall offer unto the LORD offerings in righteousness.
Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the LORD, as in the days of old, and as in ancient years.

Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the great and terrible day of the LORD come.
And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children,
And the heart of the children to their fathers;
Lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.

[*From* MALACHI, 2 and 4.]

5. THE REBUILDING OF JERUSALEM UNDER NEHEMIAH

But Jerusalem remained a heap of ruins, and Nehemiah, a cup-bearer of Artaxerxes, king of Persia, obtained leave to come to Jerusalem to restore it (445 B.C.).[1] *The wall was built in the face of opposition from the neighbouring tribes.*

So I [Nehemiah] came to Jerusalem, and was there three days. And I arose in the night, I and some few men with me; neither told I any man what my God put into my heart to do for Jerusalem: neither was there any beast with me, save the beast that I rode upon. And I went out by night by the valley gate, even toward the dragon's well, and to the dung gate, and viewed the walls of Jerusalem, which were broken down, and the gates thereof were consumed with fire. Then I went on to the fountain gate and to the king's pool: but there was no place for the beast that was under me to pass. Then went I up in the night by the brook, and viewed the wall; and I turned back, and entered by the valley gate, and so returned. And the rulers knew not whither I went, or what I did; neither had I as yet told it to the Jews, nor to the priests, nor to the nobles, nor to the rulers, nor to the rest that did the work. Then said I unto them, Ye see the evil case that we are in, how Jerusalem lieth waste, and the gates thereof are burned with fire: come and let us build up the wall of Jerusalem, that we be no more a reproach. And I told them of the hand of my God which was good upon me; as also of the king's words that he had spoken unto me. And they said, Let us rise up and build. So they strengthened their hands for the good work. But when Sanballat the Horonite, and Tobiah the servant, the Ammonite, and Geshem the Arabian, heard it, they laughed us to scorn, and despised us, and said, What is this thing that ye do? will ye rebel against the king? Then answered I them, and said unto them, The God of heaven, he will prosper us; therefore we his

[1] i.e., according to Nehemiah I. 1, in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes. But see Note on page 158.

servants will arise and build: but ye have no portion, nor right, nor memorial, in Jerusalem.

But it came to pass that, when Sanballat heard that we builded the wall, he was wroth, and took great indignation, and mocked the Jews. And he spake before his brethren and the army of Samaria, and said, What do these feeble Jews? will they fortify themselves? will they sacrifice? will they make an end in a day? will they revive the stones out of the heaps of rubbish, seeing they are burned? Now Tobiah the Ammonite was by him, and he said, Even that which they build, if a fox go up, he shall break down their stone wall.

Hear, O our God; for we are despised: and turn back their reproach upon their own head, and give them up to spoiling in a land of captivity: and cover not their iniquity, and let not their sin be blotted out from before thee: for they have provoked thee to anger before the builders. So we built the wall; and all the wall was joined together unto half the height thereof: for the people had a mind to work.

But it came to pass that, when Sanballat, and Tobiah, and the Arabians, and the Ammonites, and the Ashdodites, heard that the repairing of the walls of Jerusalem went forward, and that the breaches began to be stopped, then they were very wroth; and they conspired all of them together to come and fight against Jerusalem, and to cause confusion therein. But we made our prayer unto our God, and set a watch against them day and night, because of them. And Judah said, The strength of the bearers of burdens is decayed, and there is much rubbish; so that we are not able to build the wall. And our adversaries said, They shall not know, neither see, till we come into the midst of them, and slay them, and cause the work to cease. And it came to pass that, when the Jews which dwelt by them came, they said unto us ten times from all places, Ye must return unto us. Therefore set I in the lowest parts of the space behind the wall, in the open places, I even set the people after their families with their swords, their spears, and their bows. And I looked, and rose up, and said unto the nobles, and to the rulers, and to the rest of the people, Be not ye afraid of them: remember the Lord, which is great and terrible, and fight for your brethren, your sons and your daughters, your wives and your houses. And it came to pass, when our enemies heard that it was known unto us, and God had brought their counsel to nought, that we returned all of us to the wall, every one unto his work. And it came to pass from that time forth, that half of my servants wrought in the work, and half of them held the spears, the shields, and the bows, and the coats of mail; and the rulers were behind all the house of Judah. They that builded the wall and they that bare burdens laded themselves, every one with one of his hands wrought in the work, and with the other held his weapon; and the builders, every one had

his sword girded by his side, and so builded. And he that sounded the trumpet was by me. And I said unto the nobles, and to the rulers and to the rest of the people, The work is great and large, and we are separated upon the wall, one far from another: in what place soever ye hear the sound of the trumpet, resort ye thither unto us; our God shall fight for us. So we wrought in the work: and half of them held the spears from the rising of the morning till the stars appeared. Likewise at the same time said I unto the people, Let every one with his servant lodge within Jerusalem, that in the night they may be a guard to us, and may labour in the day. So neither I, nor my brethren, nor my servants, nor the men of the guard which followed me, none of us put off our clothes, every one went with his weapon to the water.

So the wall was finished in the twenty and fifth day of the month Elul, in fifty and two days. And it came to pass, when all our enemies heard thereof, that all the heathen that were about us feared, and were much cast down in their own eyes: for they perceived that this work was wrought of our God. [*From* NEHEMIAH, 2, 4, and 6.]

6. PEACE UNDER THE PERSIAN EMPIRE

The message of Joel

But though Jerusalem had her Temple and her walls again, she never recovered any national autonomy.

She remained a vassal of the Persian Empire till its destruction by Alexander the Great, receiving kindly treatment as a rule from the Persian kings. Towards the end of this period, which was one of comparative rest and quiet, the prophet Joel describes a terrible invasion of his country by locusts, exhorts the Jews to repentance, and promises restored fertility and a renewal of the divine guidance.[1]

Hear this, ye old men,
And give ear, all ye inhabitants of the land.
Hath this been in your days,
Or in the days of your fathers?
Tell ye your children of it, and let your children tell their children,
and their children another generation.
That which the palmerworm hath left hath the locust eaten;
And that which the locust hath left hath the cankerworm eaten;
And that which the cankerworm hath left hath the caterpiller eaten.
Awake, ye drunkards, and weep;
And howl, all ye drinkers of wine,
Because of the sweet wine;
For it is cut off from your mouth.

[1] The ascription of Joel's prophecies to this period, though generally accepted, is not free from doubt.

For a nation is come up upon my land,
Strong, and without number; his teeth are the teeth of a lion,
And he hath the jaw teeth of a great lion.
He hath laid my vine waste,
And barked my fig tree:
He hath made it clean bare, and cast it away;
The branches thereof are made white.
Lament like a virgin girded with sackcloth for the husband of her youth.
The meal offering and the drink offering is cut off from the house of the LORD;
The priests, the LORD'S ministers, mourn.
The field is wasted,
The land mourneth;
For the corn is wasted,
The new wine is dried up,
The old languisheth.
Be ashamed, O ye husbandmen,
Howl, O ye vinedressers,
For the wheat and for the barley,
For the harvest of the field is perished.
The vine is withered,
And the fig tree languisheth;
The pomegranate tree, the palm tree also, and the apple tree,
Even all the trees of the field are withered:
For joy is withered away from the sons of men.
Gird yourselves with sackcloth, and lament, ye priests;
Howl, ye ministers of the altar;
Come, lie all night in sackcloth, ye ministers of my God;
For the meal offering and the drink offering is withholden from the house of your God.
Sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly,
Gather the old men and all the inhabitants of the land unto the house of the LORD your God, and cry unto the LORD.
Alas for the day! for the day of the LORD is at hand,
And as destruction from the Almighty shall it come.
Is not the meat cut off before our eyes,
Yea, joy and gladness from the house of our God?
The seeds rot under their clods;
The garners are laid desolate,
The barns are broken down;
For the corn is withered.
How do the beasts groan!
The herds of cattle are perplexed, because they have no pasture;
Yea, the flocks of sheep are made desolate.
O LORD, to thee do I cry:
For the fire hath devoured the pastures of the wilderness,

And the flame hath burned all the trees of the field.
Yea, the beasts of the field pant unto thee,
For the water brooks are dried up,
And the fire hath devoured the pastures of the wilderness.

Blow ye the trumpet in Zion,
And sound an alarm in my holy mountain;
Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble:
For the day of the LORD cometh,
For it is nigh at hand;
A day of darkness and gloominess,
A day of clouds and thick darkness,
As the dawn spread upon the mountains;
A great people and a strong,
There hath not been ever the like,
Neither shall be any more after them,
Even to the years of many generations.
A fire devoureth before them;
And behind them a flame burneth:
The land is as the garden of Eden before them,
And behind them a desolate wilderness;
Yea, and none hath escaped them.
The appearance of them is as the appearance of horses;
And as horsemen, so do they run.
Like the noise of chariots on the tops of the mountains do they leap,
Like the noise of a flame of fire that devoureth the stubble,
As a strong people set in battle array.
At their presence the peoples are in anguish:
All faces are waxed pale.
They run like mighty men;
They climb the wall like men of war;
And they march every one on his ways,
And they break not their ranks.
Neither doth one thrust another;
They march every one in his path:
And they burst through the weapons,
And break not off their course.
They leap upon the city;
They run upon the wall;
They climb up into the houses;
They enter in at the windows like a thief.
The earth quaketh before them;
The heavens tremble:
The sun and the moon are darkened,
And the stars withdraw their shining:
And the LORD uttereth his voice before his army;
For his camp is very great;

For he is strong that executeth his word:
For the day of the LORD is great and very terrible;
And who can abide it?

Yet even now, saith the LORD, turn ye unto me with all your heart,
And with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning:
And rend your heart, and not your garments,
And turn unto the LORD your God:
For he is gracious and full of compassion,
Slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy,
And repenteth him of the evil.
Who knoweth whether he will not turn and repent,
And leave a blessing behind him,
Even a meal offering and a drink offering unto the LORD your God?

Blow the trumpet in Zion,
Sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly:
Gather the people,
Sanctify the congregation,
Assemble the old men,
Gather the children, and those that suck the breasts:
Let the bridegroom go forth of his chamber,
And the bride out of her closet.
Let the priests, the ministers of the LORD, weep between the porch and the altar,
And let them say, Spare thy people, O LORD,
And give not thine heritage to reproach,
That the nations should rule over them:
Wherefore should they say among the peoples, Where is their God?

Then was the LORD jealous for his land, and had pity on his people.
And the LORD answered and said unto his people,
Behold, I will send you corn, and wine, and oil,
And ye shall be satisfied therewith:
And I will no more make you a reproach among the nations:
But I will remove far off from you the northern army,
And will drive him into a land barren and desolate,
His forepart into the eastern sea,
And his hinder part into the western sea;
And his stink shall come up, and his ill savour shall come up,
Because he hath done great things.
Fear not, O land, be glad and rejoice;
For the LORD hath done great things.
Be not afraid, ye beasts of the field;
For the pastures of the wilderness do spring,
For the tree beareth her fruit,
The fig tree and the vine do yield their strength.

Be glad then, ye children of Zion,
And rejoice in the LORD your God:
For he giveth you the former rain in just measure,
And he causeth to come down for you the rain,
The former rain and the latter rain, in the first month.
And the floors shall be full of wheat,
And the fats shall overflow with wine and oil.
And I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten,
The cankerworm, and the caterpiller, and the palmerworm,
My great army which I sent among you.
And ye shall eat in plenty and be satisfied,
And shall praise the name of the LORD your God,
That hath dealt wondrously with you:
And my people shall never be ashamed.
And ye shall know that I am in the midst of Israel,
And that I am the LORD your God, and there is none else:
And my people shall never be ashamed.

And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh;
And your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,
Your old men shall dream dreams,
Your young men shall see visions;
And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit. [*From* JOEL, 1 and 2.]

VIII

THE PERIOD OF GRECIAN ASCENDANCY

Under Alexander the Great, the Ptolemies, and the Seleucidae (333–167 B.C.)[1]

IN 333 B.C. Alexander the Great destroyed the Persian Empire and soon received the allegiance of the Jews. The disintegration of the great oriental empire, with the hoped-for restoration of the reign of Jehovah in Zion, are thus described.

1. THE BREAK-UP OF THE PERSIAN EMPIRE BY ALEXANDER THE GREAT

Behold, the LORD maketh the earth empty,
And maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down,
And scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof.
And it shall be, as with the people, so with the priest;
As with the servant, so with his master;
As with the maid, so with her mistress;
As with the buyer, so with the seller;
As with the lender, so with the borrower;
As with the taker of usury, so with the giver of usury to him.
The earth shall be utterly emptied, and utterly spoiled;
For the LORD hath spoken this word.
The earth mourneth and fadeth away,
The world languisheth and fadeth away,
The lofty people of the earth do languish.
The earth also is polluted under the inhabitants thereof;
Because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant.
Therefore hath the curse devoured the earth,
And they that dwell therein are found guilty:
Therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men left.
The new wine mourneth,
The vine languisheth,
All the merryhearted do sigh.
The mirth of tabrets ceaseth,
The noise of them that rejoice endeth,
The joy of the harp ceaseth.
They shall not drink wine with a song;
Strong drink shall be bitter to them that drink it.
The city of confusion is broken down:
Every house is shut up, that no man may come in.
There is a crying in the streets because of the wine;

[1] See Note C at the end of this volume.

All joy is darkened,
The mirth of the land is gone.
In the city is left desolation,
And the gate is smitten with destruction.
For thus shall it be in the midst of the earth among the peoples,
As the shaking of an olive tree, as the grape gleanings when the vintage is done.
These shall lift up their voice, they shall shout;
For the majesty of the LORD they cry aloud from the sea.
Wherefore glorify ye the LORD in the east, even the name of the LORD, the God of Israel, in the isles of the sea.
From the uttermost part of the earth have we heard songs, glory to the righteous.
But I said, I pine away, I pine away, woe is me!
The treacherous dealers have dealt treacherously; yea, the treacherous dealers have dealt very treacherously.
Fear, and the pit, and the snare, are upon thee, O inhabitant of the earth.
And it shall come to pass, that he who fleeth from the noise of the fear shall fall into the pit;
And he that cometh up out of the midst of the pit shall be taken in the snare:
For the windows on high are opened,
And the foundations of the earth do shake.
The earth is utterly broken,
The earth is clean dissolved,
The earth is moved exceedingly.
The earth shall stagger like a drunken man,
And shall be moved to and fro like a hut;
And the transgression thereof shall be heavy upon it,
And it shall fall, and not rise again.
And it shall come to pass in that day, that the LORD shall punish the host of the high ones on high, and the kings of the earth upon the earth.
And they shall be gathered together, as prisoners are gathered in the pit, and shall be shut up in the prison, and after many days shall they be visited.
Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed;
For the LORD of hosts shall reign in mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously. [ISAIAH, 24.][1]

2. PALESTINE UNDER THE PTOLEMIES

What had really begun was the Hellenization of the East. After the death of Alexander, his generals fought for the spoils of his Empire,

[1] The suggestion that Isaiah 24–6 forms the latest appendix to the book of 'Isaiah', and refers to this period, is followed here. But the date of these Chapters is by no means free from doubt.

the Ptolemies obtaining Egypt and the Seleucidae Syria. Palestine became the fighting ground between these two dynasties, Egypt being paramount till 199 B.C., *in which year Palestine fell to the Seleucidae. To the beginning of this period, probably between* 320–280, *Zechariah's allegory of the Good Shepherd is now commonly attributed.*

The Allegory of the Good Shepherd

The Good Shepherd tries to befriend the people of Israel as against their rulers. The people reject him and he is replaced by the worthless Shepherd. The worthless Shepherd is smitten, and the trials of the people are brought to a happy issue.

Thus said the LORD my God:
Feed the flock of slaughter;
Whose possessors slay them,
And hold themselves not guilty;
And they that sell them say,
Blessed be the LORD, for I am rich:
And their own shepherds pity them not.[1]
For I will no more pity the inhabitants of the land, saith the LORD:
But, lo, I will deliver the men every one into his neighbour's hand,
And into the hand of his king:
And they shall smite the land,
And out of their hand I will not deliver them.
So I fed the flock of slaughter,
Verily the poor of the flock.
And I took unto me two staves;
The one I called Beauty,
And the other I called Bands;
And I fed the flock.
And I cut off the three shepherds in one month;
For my soul was weary of them,
And their soul also loathed me.
Then said I, I will not feed you:
That that dieth, let it die;
And that that is to be cut off,
Let it be cut off;
And let them which are left eat every one the flesh of another.
And I took my staff Beauty, and cut it asunder,
That I might break my covenant which I had made with all the peoples.
And it was broken in that day:
And thus the poor of the flock that gave heed unto me knew that it was the word of the LORD.
And I said unto them, If ye think good, give me my hire; and if not, forbear.

[1] i.e., Feed the flock destined for slaughter, whose buyers (the marginal reading), e.g., the Ptolemies and the Seleucidae, slay them with impunity, while their treacherous rulers betray them without pity for bribes. (*The Hebrew Prophets*; Woods and Powell.)

So they weighed for my hire thirty pieces of silver.
And the LORD said unto me,
Cast it unto the potter,[1] the goodly price that I was prised at of them.
And I took the thirty pieces of silver, and cast them unto the potter,[1] in the house of the LORD.
Then I cut asunder mine other staff, even Bands,
That I might break the brotherhood between Judah and Israel.

And the LORD said unto me,
Take unto thee yet again the instruments of a foolish shepherd.
For, lo, I will raise up a shepherd in the land,
Which shall not visit those that be cut off,
Neither shall seek those that be scattered,
Nor heal that that is broken;
Neither shall he feed that which is sound,
But he shall eat the flesh of the fat,
And shall tear their hoofs in pieces.

Woe to the worthless shepherd that leaveth the flock!
The sword shall be upon his arm, and upon his right eye;
His arm shall be clean dried up,
And his right eye shall be utterly darkened.
Awake, O sword, against my shepherd,
And against the man that is my fellow,
Saith the LORD of hosts:
Smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered;
And I will turn mine hand upon the little ones.
And it shall come to pass, that in all the land, saith the LORD,
Two parts therein shall be cut off and die;
But the third shall be left therein.
And I will bring the third part through the fire,
And will refine them as silver is refined,
And will try them as gold is tried:
They shall call on my name, and I will hear them:
I will say, It is my people;
And they shall say, The LORD is my God.

[*From* ZECHARIAH, 11, 13.]

3. PALESTINE UNDER THE SELEUCIDAE

The Seleucidae of Syria became masters of the Jews in 199 B.C., *and endeavoured to force Greek religion and civilization upon them. Antiochus IV, who named himself Epiphanes, the Brilliant, and who was nicknamed by the Jews, Epimanes, the Madman, began to reign in* 175 B.C. *and at once endeavoured by every manner of insult and persecution to break the spirit of the Jews. Having conquered Egypt,*

[1] The correct reading is 'into the treasury'.

he turned upon Jerusalem on the way home, took all the treasures of the temple, and slaughtered many of the Jews.

And Antiochus, after that he had smitten Egypt, returned in the hundred and forty and third year, and went up against Israel and Jerusalem with a great multitude, and entered presumptuously into the sanctuary and took the golden altar, and the candlestick of the light, and all that pertained thereto, and the table of the shewbread, and the cups to pour withal, and the bowls, and the golden censers, and the veil, and the crowns, and the adorning of gold which was on the face of the temple, and he scaled it all off. And he took the silver and the gold and the precious vessels; and he took the hidden treasures which he found. And when he had taken all, he went away into his own land, and he made a great slaughter, and spake very presumptuously. And there came great mourning upon Israel, in every place where they were; and the rulers and elders groaned, the virgins and young men were made feeble, and the beauty of the women was changed. Every bridegroom took up lamentation, she that sat in the marriage chamber was in heaviness. And the land was moved for the inhabitants thereof, and all the house of Jacob was clothed with shame. [I MACCABEES, I. 20–28.]

Two years later Antiochus established a citadel in Jerusalem from which he overawed the inhabitants.

And after two full years the king sent a chief collector of tribute unto the cities of Judah, and he came unto Jerusalem with a great multitude. And he spake words of peace unto them in subtilty, and they gave him credence: and he fell upon the city suddenly, and smote it very sore, and destroyed much people out of Israel. And he took the spoils of the city, and set it on fire, and pulled down the houses thereof, and the walls thereof, on every side. And they led captive the women and the children, and the cattle they took in possession. And they builded the city of David with a great and strong wall, with strong towers, and it became unto them a citadel. And they put there a sinful nation, transgressors of the law, and they strengthened themselves therein. And they stored up arms and victuals, and gathering together the spoils of Jerusalem, they laid them up there, and they became a sore snare: and it became a place to lie in wait in against the sanctuary, and an evil adversary to Israel continually. And they shed innocent blood on every side of the sanctuary, and defiled the sanctuary. And the inhabitants of Jerusalem fled because of them; and she became a habitation of strangers, and she became strange to them that were born in her, and her children forsook her. Her sanctuary was laid waste like a wilderness, her feasts were turned into mourning, her sabbaths into reproach, her honour into contempt. According to her glory,

so was her dishonour multiplied, and her high estate was turned into mourning. [I MACCABEES, I. 29–40.]

Antiochus next forbade the Jews to exercise their own religion and ordered them to adopt the pagan rites of the Greeks.

And king Antiochus wrote to his whole kingdom, that all should be one people, and that each should forsake his own laws. And all the nations agreed according to the word of the king; and many of Israel consented to his worship, and sacrificed to the idols, and profaned the sabbath. And the king sent letters by the hand of messengers unto Jerusalem and the cities of Judah, that they should follow laws strange to the land, and should forbid whole burnt offerings and sacrifice and drink offerings in the sanctuary; and should profane the sabbaths and feasts, and pollute the sanctuary and them that were holy; that they should build altars, and temples, and shrines for idols, and should sacrifice swine's flesh and unclean beasts: and that they should leave their sons uncircumcised, that they should make their souls abominable with all manner of uncleanness and profanation; so that they might forget the law, and change all the ordinances. And whosoever shall not do according to the word of the king, he shall die. According to all these words wrote he to his whole kingdom; and he appointed overseers over all the people, and he commanded the cities of Judah to sacrifice, city by city. And from the people were gathered together unto them many, every one that had forsaken the law; and they did evil things in the land; and they made Israel to hide themselves in every place of refuge which they had. [I MACCABEES, I. 41–53.]

The allegories of Daniel

During the terrible persecution which followed, the Jews were encouraged to stand fast in their faith by the writer of the book of Daniel,[1] *whose historical allegories of Nebuchadnezzar, his pride and the downfall which followed his treatment of the servants of Jehovah, are veiled allusions to Antiochus and his persecution of the Jews. The succession of the four great empires which (in the writer's view) had in time ruled the world, Chaldaea* (i.e. *Babylon under Nebuchadnezzar's dynasty*), *Media, Persia, and Macedonia, with the Seleucidae as the successors of Macedonia in Syria, is described under the form of a prediction by Daniel in the time of the Babylonian Captivity.*

The vision of the Four Beasts and the Little Horn

In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon Daniel had a dream and visions of his head upon his bed: then he wrote the dream and told the sum of the matters. Daniel spake and said, I saw in my vision by night, and, behold, the four winds of the heaven brake

[1] See Note D at the end of this volume.

forth upon the great sea. And four great beasts came up from the sea, diverse one from another. The first was like a lion, and had eagle's wings:[1] I beheld till the wings thereof were plucked, and it was lifted up from the earth, and made to stand upon two feet as a man, and a man's heart was given to it. And behold another beast, a second, like to a bear,[2] and it was raised up on one side, and three ribs were in his mouth between his teeth: and they said thus unto it, Arise, devour much flesh. After this I beheld, and lo another, like a leopard,[3] which had upon the back of it four wings of a fowl; the beast had also four heads; and dominion was given to it. After this I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast,[4] terrible and powerful, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth: it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with his feet: and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns. I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another horn,[5] a little one, before which three of the first horns were plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking great things.

I beheld till thrones were placed,[6] and one that was ancient of days did sit: his raiment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like pure wool; his throne was fiery flames, and the wheels thereof burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgement was set, and the books were opened.

I beheld at that time because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake; I beheld even till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and he was given to be burned with fire. And as for the rest of the beasts, their dominion was taken away: yet their lives were prolonged for a season and a time.

I saw in the night visions, and, behold, there came with the clouds of heaven one like unto a son of man, and he came even to the ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all the peoples, nations, and languages should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.

As for me Daniel, my spirit was grieved in the midst of my body, and the visions of my head troubled me. I came near unto one of them that stood by, and asked him the truth concerning all this. So he told me, and made me know the interpretation of the things. These great beasts, which are four, are four kings, which shall arise out of the earth. But the saints of the Most High shall receive the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever.

[1] Chaldaea. [2] Media. [3] Persia. [4] Macedonia (Alexander the Great).
[5] Antiochus Epiphanes. [6] i.e., for the judgement of the nations.

Then I desired to know the truth concerning the fourth beast, which was diverse from all of them, exceeding terrible, whose teeth were of iron, and his nails of brass; which devoured, brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with his feet; and concerning the ten horns that were on his head, and the other horn which came up, and before which three fell; even that horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spake great things, whose look was more stout than his fellows. I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them; until the ancient of days came, and judgement was given to the saints of the Most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom. Thus he said, The fourth beast shall be a fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all the kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces. And as for the ten horns, out of this kingdom shall ten kings arise: and another shall arise after them; and he shall be diverse from the former, and he shall put down three kings. And he shall speak words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High: and he shall think to change the times and the law; and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and half a time. But the judgement shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end. And the kingdom and the dominion, and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High: his kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him. Here is the end of the matter. As for me Daniel, my thoughts much troubled me, and my countenance was changed in me: but I kept the matter in my heart. [DANIEL, 7.]

The vision of the Ram and the He-Goat

In the third year of the reign of king Belshazzar a vision appeared unto me, even unto me Daniel, after that which appeared unto me at the first. And I saw in the vision; now it was so, that when I saw, I was in Shushan the palace, which is in the province of Elam; and I saw in the vision, and I was by the river Ulai. Then I lifted up mine eyes, and saw, and, behold, there stood before the river a ram[1] which had two horns: and the two horns were high; but one was higher than the other, and the higher came up last. I saw the ram pushing westward, and northward, and southward; and no beasts could stand before him, neither was there any that could deliver out of his hand; but he did according to his will, and magnified himself. And as I was considering, behold, an he-goat[2] came from the west over the face of the whole earth, and touched not the ground: and the goat had a notable horn[3] between his eyes.

[1] The Empire of the Medes and Persians. According to the writer the higher and later horn was the Persian.
[2] Macedonia. [3] Alexander the Great.

And he came to the ram that had the two horns, which I saw standing before the river, and ran upon him in the fury of his power. And I saw him come close unto the ram, and he was moved with choler against him, and smote the ram, and brake his two horns; and there was no power in the ram to stand before him: but he cast him down to the ground, and trampled upon him; and there was none that could deliver the ram out of his hand. And the he-goat magnified himself exceedingly: and when he was strong, the great horn was broken;[1] and instead of it there came up four notable horns[2] toward the four winds of heaven. And out of one of them came forth a little horn,[3] which waxed exceeding great, toward the south, and toward the east, and towards the glorious land. And it waxed great, even to the host of heaven; and some of the host and of the stars it cast down to the ground, and trampled upon them. Yea, it magnified itself, even to the prince of the host; and it took away from him the continual burnt offering, and the place of his sanctuary was cast down. And the host was given over to it together with the continual burnt offering through transgression; and it cast down truth to the ground and it did its pleasure and prospered.

Then I heard a holy one speaking; and another holy one said unto that certain one which spake, How long shall be the vision concerning the continual burnt offering, and the transgression that maketh desolate, to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot? And he said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred evenings and mornings; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed.

And it came to pass, when I, even I Daniel, had seen the vision, that I sought to understand it; and, behold, there stood before me as the appearance of a man. And I heard a man's voice between the banks of Ulai, which called, and said, Gabriel, make this man to understand the vision. So he came near where I stood; and when he came, I was affrighted, and fell upon my face: but he said unto me, Understand, O son of man; for the vision belongeth to the time of the end. Now as he was speaking with me, I fell into a deep sleep with my face toward the ground: but he touched me, and set me upright. And he said, Behold, I will make thee know what shall be in the latter time of the indignation: for it belongeth to the appointed time of the end. The ram which thou sawest that had the two horns, they are the kings of Media and Persia. And the rough he-goat is the king of Greece: and the great horn that is between his eyes is the first king. And as for that which was broken, in the place whereof four stood up, four kingdoms shall stand up out of the nation, but not with his power. And in the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors are come to the full, a

[1] Alexander died in 324 B.C., at the age of thirty-two.
[2] Four of Alexander's generals who divided his empire.
[3] Antiochus Epiphanes.

king of fierce countenance,[1] and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up. And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power; and he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper and do his pleasure: and he shall destroy the mighty ones and the holy people. And through his policy he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand; and he shall magnify himself in his heart, and in their security shall he destroy many: he shall also stand up against the prince of princes; but he shall be broken without hand.[2] And the vision of the evenings and mornings which hath been told is true: but shut thou up the vision; for it belongeth to many days to come. And I Daniel fainted, and was sick certain days; then I rose up, and did the king's business: and I was astonished at the vision, but none understood it. [DANIEL, 8.]

The Abomination of Desolation

As a crowning insult to the Jews, Antiochus set up the Abomination of Desolation in Jerusalem.

And on the fifteenth day of Chislev, in the hundred and forty and fifth year, they builded an abomination of desolation upon the altar, and in the cities of Judah on every side they builded idol altars. And at the doors of the houses and in the streets they burnt incense. And they rent in pieces the books of the law which they found, and set them on fire. And wheresoever was found with any a book of the covenant, and if any consented to the law, the king's sentence delivered him to death. Thus did they in their might unto Israel, to those that were found month by month in the cities. And on the five and twentieth day of the month they sacrificed upon the idol altar, which was upon the altar of God. And the women that had circumcised their children they put to death according to the commandment. And they hanged their babes about their necks, and destroyed their houses, and them that had circumcised them. And many in Israel were fully resolved and confirmed in themselves not to eat unclean things. And they chose to die, that they might not be defiled with the meats, and that they might not profane the holy covenant: and they died. And there came exceeding great wrath upon Israel. [I MACCABEES, 1. 54–end.]

The Maccabees

This insult to the Temple was the spark which lighted the fires of revolt. In 167 B.C. *Mattathias, the priest, and his five sons, broke into open rebellion. Judas, the third son, who was called Maccabaeus, became the leader of his countrymen and his military genius made his campaigns one of the most stirring chapters in Israelitish history. He defeated the Syrian armies and in* 165 B.C. *restored the Temple Worship. Antiochus Epiphanes died in* 164 B.C., *but his successor continued the struggle*

[1] Antiochus Epiphanes. [2] Antiochus died of disease in 164 B.C.

with Judas. Alarmed at the reports of Judas' exploits, he collected an immense army against him.

The Syrian army and its trained elephants

And when the king heard this, he was angry, and gathered together all his Friends, even the rulers of his host, and them that were over the horse. And there came unto him from other kingdoms, and from isles of the sea, bands of hired soldiers. And the number of his forces was a hundred thousand footmen, and twenty thousand horsemen, and two and thirty elephants trained for war. And they went through Idumæa, and encamped against Bethsura, and fought against it many days, and made engines of war; and they of Bethsura came out, and burned them with fire, and fought valiantly. And Judas removed from the citadel, and encamped at Bethzacharias, over against the king's camp. And the king rose early in the morning, and removed his army at full speed along the road to Bethzacharias, and his forces made them ready to battle, and sounded with the trumpets. And they shewed the elephants the blood of grapes and mulberries, that they might prepare them for the battle. And they divided the beasts among the phalanxes, and they set by each elephant a thousand men armed with coats of mail, and helmets of brass on their heads; and for each beast were appointed five hundred chosen horsemen. These were ready beforehand, wheresoever the beast was; and whithersoever the beast went, they went with him; they departed not from him. And towers of wood were upon them, strong and covered, one upon each beast, girt fast upon him with cunning contrivances; and upon each beast were two and thirty valiant men that fought upon them, beside his Indian (and the residue of the horsemen he set on this side and that side at the two parts of the army), striking terror into the enemy, and protected by the phalanxes. Now when the sun shone upon the shields of gold and brass, the mountains shone therewith, and blazed like torches of fire. And a part of the king's army was spread upon the high mountains, and some on the low ground, and they went on firmly and in order. And all that heard the noise of their multitude, and the marching of the multitude, and the rattling of the arms, did quake: for the army was exceeding great and strong.

[I MACCABEES, 6. 28–41.]

IX. THE INDEPENDENCE OF THE JEWS

In spite of the military resources of his enemies, Judas succeeded in obtaining from Syria in 162 B.C. *a guarantee of religious freedom, but another twenty years of struggle was necessary before Simon, the last survivor of the five brothers, secured in* 142 B.C. *a treaty from Syria which at length gave the Jews their political freedom. Simon became*

hereditary leader and high priest and thus established the Hasmonean dynasty named after Hasmon his ancestor. Under his rule his country enjoyed a greater measure of social happiness than at any period of her post-exilic history.

This dynasty, with Simon's son, John Hyrcanus (135–105 B.C.), *who took the title of king, and his son Alexander Jannaeus* (103–78 B.C.) *as the leading members of it, continued to reign for nearly eighty years. But the country was torn by internal discords owing to the quarrels of the Pharisees and the Sadducees, and in* 65 B.C. *the Romans interfered, took Jerusalem and reduced the Jews once more to vassalage.*

X. THE ROMAN ASCENDANCY (from 65 B.C.)

A long period of unrest under the Romans led to the siege of Jerusalem and the destruction of the Temple by the Romans in A.D. 70. *The last effort of the Jews in* A.D. 135 *to shake off the Roman domination ended in the annihilation of their political nationality. Thereafter they existed as a church rather than as a state or a nation.*

PART II

HEBREW 'WISDOM'

By the time of the return of the Jews from the Babylonian Captivity, the Prophets had delivered their message, and the Priests had laid the foundations of their compilation of the books of the Law and the Prophets. During the succeeding two or three centuries, the third great class of Jewish teacher, the Wise Man, played his part and wrote the 'Wisdom' literature of his people. This literature deals largely with 'Wisdom', a word used in this connexion with a somewhat special sense which it is difficult to define and which can only be appreciated by a study of the literature itself. But it also touches on human life in all its relations, from sublime conceptions of the meaning of life to the 'level of every day's most common need'. With a background of deeply religious spirit, it rises at times to majestic heights of thought; at others it is secular in tone, shrewd, homely, and even humorous.

The Wisdom literature properly so called includes the three canonical books, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Job, and two Apocryphal works, Ecclesiasticus and the Wisdom of Solomon. The following extracts from these books are arranged under the principal subjects with which they deal.

1. WISDOM

The Search for Wisdom

Gold and precious stones are found in mines

Surely there is a mine for silver,
And a place for gold which they refine.
Iron is taken out of the earth,
And brass is molten out of the stone.
Man setteth an end to darkness,
And searcheth out to the furthest bound
The stones of thick darkness and of the shadow of death.
He breaketh open a shaft away from where men sojourn;
They are forgotten of the foot that passeth by;
They hang afar from men, they swing to and fro.
As for the earth, out of it cometh bread:
And underneath it is turned up as it were by fire.
The stones thereof are the place of sapphires,
And it hath dust of gold.
That path no bird of prey knoweth,
Neither hath the falcon's eye seen it:
The proud beasts have not trodden it,
Nor hath the fierce lion passed thereby.

He putteth forth his hand upon the flinty rock;
He overturneth the mountains by the roots.
He cutteth out channels among the rocks;
And his eye seeth every precious thing.
He bindeth the streams that they trickle not;
And the thing that is hid bringeth he forth to light.

But where is wisdom found?

But where shall wisdom be found?
And where is the place of understanding?
Man knoweth not the price thereof;
Neither is it found in the land of the living.
The deep saith, It is not in me:
And the sea saith, It is not with me.
It cannot be gotten for gold,
Neither shall silver be weighed for the price thereof.
It cannot be valued with the gold of Ophir,
With the precious onyx, or the sapphire.
Gold and glass cannot equal it:
Neither shall the exchange thereof be jewels of fine gold.
No mention shall be made of coral or of crystal:
Yea, the price of wisdom is above rubies.
The topaz of Ethiopia shall not equal it,
Neither shall it be valued with pure gold.
Whence then cometh wisdom?
And where is the place of understanding?
Seeing it is hid from the eyes of all living.
And kept close from the fowls of the air.
Destruction and Death say,
We have heard a rumour thereof with our ears.

Wisdom is the fear of the Lord

God understandeth the way thereof,
And he knoweth the place thereof.
For he looketh to the ends of the earth,
And seeth under the whole heaven;
To make a weight for the wind;
Yea, he meteth out the waters by measure.
When he made a decree for the rain,
And a way for the lightning of the thunder:
Then did he see it, and declare it;
He established it, yea, and searched it out.
And unto man he said,
Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom;
And to depart from evil is understanding. [JOB, 28.]

Wisdom in praise of herself

Wisdom shall praise herself,
And shall glory in the midst of her people.
In the congregation of the Most High shall she open her mouth,
And glory in the presence of his power.

I came forth from the mouth of the Most High,
And covered the earth as a mist.
I dwelt in high places,
And my throne is in the pillar of the cloud.
Alone I compassed the circuit of heaven,
And walked in the depth of the abyss.
In the waves of the sea, and in all the earth,
And in every people and nation, I got a possession.
With all these I sought rest;
And in whose inheritance shall I lodge?
Then the Creator of all things gave me a commandment;
And he that created me made my tabernacle to rest,
And said, Let thy tabernacle be in Jacob,
And thine inheritance in Israel.
He created me from the beginning before the world;
And to the end I shall not fail.
In the holy tabernacle I ministered before him;
And so was I established in Sion.
In the beloved city likewise he gave me rest;
And in Jerusalem was my authority.
And I took root in a people that was glorified,
Even in the portion of the Lord's own inheritance.
I was exalted like a cedar in Libanus,
And as a cypress tree on the mountains of Hermon.
I was exalted like a palm tree on the sea shore,
And as rose plants in Jericho,
And as a fair olive tree in the plain;
And I was exalted as a plane tree.
As cinnamon and aspalathus, I have given a scent of perfumes;
And as choice myrrh, I spread abroad a pleasant odour;
As galbanum, and onyx, and stacte,
And as the fume of frankincense in the tabernacle.
As the terebinth I stretched out my branches;
And my branches are branches of glory and grace.
As the vine I put forth grace;
And my flowers are the fruit of glory and riches.
Come unto me, ye that are desirous of me,
And be ye filled with my produce.
For my memorial is sweeter than honey.
And mine inheritance than the honeycomb.
They that eat me shall yet be hungry;

And they that drink me shall yet be thirsty.
He that obeyeth me shall not be ashamed;
And they that work in me shall not do amiss.

All these things are the book of the covenant of the Most High God,
Even the law which Moses commanded us for a heritage unto the assemblies of Jacob.
It is he that maketh wisdom abundant, as Pishon,
And as Tigris in the days of new fruits;
That maketh understanding full as Euphrates,
And as Jordan in the days of harvest;
That maketh instruction to shine forth as the light,
As Gihon in the days of vintage.
The first man knew her not perfectly;
And in like manner the last hath not traced her out.
For her thoughts are filled from the sea,
And her counsels from the great deep.

And I came out as a stream from a river,
And as a conduit into a garden.
I said, I will water my garden,
And will water abundantly my garden bed;
And, lo, my stream became a river,
And my river became a sea.
I will yet bring instruction to light as the morning,
And will make these things to shine forth afar off.
I will yet pour out doctrine as prophecy,
And leave it unto generations of ages.
Behold that I have not laboured for myself only,
But for all them that diligently seek her. [ECCLESIASTICUS, 24.]

Wisdom claims to have been with the Creator from everlasting

The LORD possessed me in the beginning of his way,
Before his works of old.
I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning,
Or ever the earth was.
When there were no depths, I was brought forth;
When there were no fountains abounding with water.
Before the mountains were settled,
Before the hills was I brought forth:
While as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields,
Nor the beginning of the dust of the world.
When he established the heavens, I was there:
When he set a circle upon the face of the deep:
When he made firm the skies above:
When the fountains of the deep became strong:
When he gave to the sea its bound,

That the waters should not transgress his commandment:
When he marked out the foundations of the earth:
Then I was by him, as a master workman:
And I was daily his delight,
Rejoicing always before him;
Rejoicing in his habitable earth;
And my delight was with the sons of men.

Now therefore, my sons, hearken unto me:
For blessed are they that keep my ways.
Hear instruction, and be wise,
And refuse it not.
Blessed is the man that heareth me,
Watching daily at my gates,
Waiting at the posts of my doors.
For whoso findeth me findeth life,
And shall obtain favour of the LORD.
But he that sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul:
All they that hate me love death. [PROVERBS, 8. 22–end.]

The supreme value of Wisdom

Happy is the man that findeth wisdom,
And the man that getteth understanding.
For the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver,
And the gain thereof than fine gold.
She is more precious than rubies:
And none of the things thou canst desire are to be compared unto her.
Length of days is in her right hand;
In her left hand are riches and honour.
Her ways are ways of pleasantness,
And all her paths are peace.
She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her:
And happy is every one that retaineth her.
The LORD by wisdom founded the earth;
By understanding he established the heavens.
By his knowledge the depths were broken up,
And the skies drop down the dew. [PROVERBS, 3. 11–20.]

2. THE WORKS OF THE LORD

The wonders of creation

The pride of the height is the firmament in its clearness,
The appearance of heaven, in the spectacle of its glory.
The sun when he appeareth, bringing tidings as he goeth forth,
Is a marvellous instrument, the work of the Most High:
At his noon he drieth up the country,

And who shall stand against his burning heat?
A man blowing a furnace is in works of heat,
But the sun three times more, burning up the mountains:
Breathing out fiery vapours,
And sending forth bright beams, he dimmeth the eyes.
Great is the Lord that made him;
And at his word he hasteneth his course.

The moon also is in all things for her season,
For a declaration of times, and a sign of the world.
From the moon is the sign of the feast day;
A light that waneth when she is come to the full.
The month is called after her name,
Increasing wonderfully in her changing;
An instrument of the hosts on high,
Shining forth in the firmament of heaven;
The beauty of heaven, the glory of the stars,
An ornament giving light in the highest places of the Lord.
At the word of the Holy One they will stand in due order,
And they will not faint in their watches.
Look upon the rainbow, and praise him that made it;
Exceeding beautiful in the brightness thereof.
It compasseth the heaven round about with a circle of glory;
The hands of the Most High have stretched it.

By his commandment he maketh the snow to fall apace,
And sendeth swiftly the lightnings of his judgement.
By reason thereof the treasure-houses are opened;
And clouds fly forth as fowls.
By his mighty power he maketh strong the clouds,
And the hailstones are broken small:
And at his appearing the mountains will be shaken,
And at his will the south wind will blow.
The voice of his thunder maketh the earth to travail;
So doth the northern storm and the whirlwind:
As birds flying down he sprinkleth the snow;
And as the lighting of the locust is the falling down thereof:
The eye will marvel at the beauty of its whiteness,
And the heart will be astonished at the raining of it.
The hoar frost also he poureth on the earth as salt;
And when it is congealed, it is as points of thorns.

The cold north wind shall blow,
And the ice shall be congealed on the water:
It shall lodge upon every gathering together of water,
And the water shall put on as it were a breastplate.
It shall devour the mountains, and burn up the wilderness,
And consume the green herb as fire.
A mist coming speedily is the healing of all things;

A dew coming after heat shall bring cheerfulness.
By his counsel he hath stilled the deep,
And planted islands therein.
They that sail on the sea tell of the danger thereof;
And when we hear it with our ears, we marvel.
Therein be also those strange and wondrous works,
Variety of all that hath life, the race of sea-monsters.
By reason of him his end hath success,
And by his word all things consist.

We may say many things, yet shall we not attain;
And the sum of our words is, He is all.
How shall we have strength to glorify him?
For he is himself the great one above all his works.
The Lord is terrible and exceeding great;
And marvellous in his power. [ECCLESIASTICUS, 43. 1–29.]

The insignificance of man in the face of the universe

Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said,
Who is this that darkeneth counsel
By words without knowledge?
Gird up now thy loins like a man:
For I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me.

Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth?
Declare, if thou hast understanding.
Who determined the measures thereof, if thou knowest?
Or who stretched the line upon it?
Whereupon were the foundations thereof fastened?
Or who laid the corner stone thereof;
When the morning stars sang together,
And all the sons of God shouted for joy?
Or who shut up the sea with doors,
When it brake forth, as if it had issued out of the womb;
When I made the cloud the garment thereof,
And thick darkness a swaddlingband for it,
And prescribed for it my decree,
And set bars and doors,
And said, Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further;
And here shall thy proud waves be stayed?
Hast thou commanded the morning since thy days began,
And caused the dayspring to know its place;
That it might take hold of the ends of the earth,
And the wicked be shaken out of it?
It is changed as clay under the seal;
And all things stand forth as a garment:
And from the wicked their light is withholden,

And the high arm is broken.
Hast thou entered into the springs of the sea?
Or hast thou walked in the recesses of the deep?
Have the gates of death been revealed unto thee?
Or hast thou seen the gates of the shadow of death?
Hast thou comprehended the breadth of the earth?
Declare, if thou knowest it all.
Where is the way to the dwelling of light,
And as for darkness, where is the place thereof;
That thou shouldest take it to the bound thereof,
And that thou shouldest discern the paths to the house thereof?
Doubtless, thou knowest, for thou wast then born,
And the number of thy days is great!
Hast thou entered the treasuries of the snow,
Or hast thou seen the treasuries of the hail,
Which I have reserved against the time of trouble,
Against the day of battle and war?
By what way is the light parted,
Or the east wind scattered upon the earth?
Who hath cleft a channel for the waterflood,
Or a way for the lightning of the thunder;
To cause it to rain on a land where no man is;
On the wilderness, wherein there is no man;
To satisfy the waste and desolate ground;
And to cause the tender grass to spring forth?
Hath the rain a father?
Or who hath begotten the drops of dew?
Out of whose womb came the ice?
And the hoary frost of heaven, who hath gendered it?
The waters are hidden as with stone,
And the face of the deep is frozen.
Canst thou bind the cluster of the Pleiades,
Or loose the bands of Orion?
Canst thou lead forth the Mazzaroth in their season?
Or canst thou guide the Bear with her train?
Knowest thou the ordinances of the heavens?
Canst thou establish the dominion thereof in the earth?
Canst thou lift up thy voice to the clouds,
That abundance of waters may cover thee?
Canst thou send forth lightnings, that they may go,
And say unto thee, Here we are?
Who hath put wisdom in the inward parts?
Or who hath given understanding to the mind?
Who can number the clouds by wisdom?
Or who can pour out the bottles of heaven,
When the dust runneth into a mass,
And the clods cleave fast together?

Wilt thou hunt the prey for the lioness?
Or satisfy the appetite of the young lions,
When they couch in their dens,
And abide in the covert to lie in wait?

Who provideth for the raven his food,
When his young ones cry unto God,
And wander for lack of meat?

Knowest thou the time when the wild goats of the rock bring forth?
Or canst thou mark when the hinds do calve?
Canst thou number the months that they fulfil?
Or knowest thou the time when they bring forth?
They bow themselves, they bring forth their young,
They cast out their sorrows.
Their young ones are in good liking, they grow up in the open field;
They go forth, and return not again.

Who hath sent out the wild ass free?
Or who hath loosed the bands of the wild ass?
Whose house I have made the wilderness,
And the salt land his dwelling place.
He scorneth the tumult of the city,
Neither heareth he the shoutings of the driver.
The range of the mountains is his pasture,
And he searcheth after every green thing.

Will the wild-ox be content to serve thee?
Or will he abide by thy crib?
Canst thou bind the wild-ox with his band in the furrow?
Or will he harrow the valleys after thee?
Wilt thou trust him, because his strength is great?
Or wilt thou leave to him thy labour?
Wilt thou confide in him, that he will bring home thy seed,
And gather the corn of thy threshing-floor?

The wing of the ostrich rejoiceth;
But are her pinions and feathers kindly?
For she leaveth her eggs on the earth,
And warmeth them in the dust,
And forgetteth that the foot may crush them,
Or that the wild beast may trample them.
She is hardened against her young ones, as if they were not hers:
Though her labour be in vain, she is without fear;
Because God hath deprived her of wisdom,
Neither hath he imparted to her understanding.
What time she lifteth up herself on high,
She scorneth the horse and his rider.

Hast thou given the horse his might?
Hast thou clothed his neck with the quivering mane?
Hast thou made him to leap as a locust?
The glory of his snorting is terrible.
He paweth in the valley, and rejoiceth in his strength:
He goeth out to meet the armed men.
He mocketh at fear, and is not dismayed;
Neither turneth he back from the sword.
The quiver rattleth against him,
The flashing spear and the javelin.
He swalloweth the ground with fierceness and rage;
Neither believeth he that it is the voice of the trumpet.
As oft as the trumpet soundeth he saith, Aha!
And he smelleth the battle afar off,
The thunder of the captains, and the shouting.

Doth the hawk soar by thy wisdom,
And stretch her wings toward the south?
Doth the eagle mount up at thy command,
And make her nest on high?
She dwelleth on the rock, and hath her lodging there,
Upon the crag of the rock, and the strong hold.
From thence she spieth out the prey;
Her eyes behold it afar off.
Her young ones also suck up blood:
And where the slain are, there is she.

Moreover the LORD answered Job, and said,
Shall he that cavilleth contend with the Almighty?
He that argueth with God, let him answer it.

Then Job answered the LORD, and said,
Behold, I am of small account; what shall I answer thee?
I lay mine hand upon my mouth.
Once have I spoken, and I will not answer;
Yea twice, but I will proceed no further.

Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said,
Gird up thy loins now like a man:
I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me.

Canst thou draw out leviathan with a fish hook?
Or press down his tongue with a cord?
Canst thou put a rope into his nose?
Or pierce his jaw through with a hook?
Will he make many supplications unto thee?
Or will he speak soft words unto thee?
Will he make a covenant with thee,
That thou shouldest take him for a servant for ever?
Wilt thou play with him as with a bird?

Or wilt thou bind him for thy maidens?
Shall the bands of fishermen make traffic of him?
Shall they part him among the merchants?
Canst thou fill his skin with barbed irons,
Or his head with fish spears?
Lay thine hand upon him;
Remember the battle, and do so no more.
Behold, the hope of him is in vain:
Shall not one be cast down even at the sight of him?
None is so fierce that he dare stir him up.

Who then is he that can stand before me?
Who hath first given unto me, that I should repay him?
Whatsoever is under the whole heaven is mine.

[*From* JOB, 38, 39, 40, and 41.]

3. THE LOT OF MEN

Great and good men

Let us now praise famous men,
And our fathers that begat us.
The Lord manifested in them great glory,
Even his mighty power from the beginning.
Such as did bear rule in their kingdoms,
And were men renowned for their power,
Giving counsel by their understanding,
Such as have brought tidings in prophecies:
Leaders of the people by their counsels,
And by their understanding men of learning for the people;
Wise were their words in their instruction:
Such as sought out musical tunes,
And set forth verses in writing:
Rich men furnished with ability,
Living peaceably in their habitations:
All these were honoured in their generations,
And were a glory in their days.
There be of them, that have left a name behind them,
To declare their praises.
And some there be, which have no memorial;
Who are perished as though they had not been,
And are become as though they had not been born;
And their children after them.
But these were men of mercy,
Whose righteous deeds have not been forgotten.
With their seed shall remain continually a good inheritance;
Their children are within the covenants.
Their seed standeth fast,
And their children for their sakes.

Their seed shall remain for ever,
And their glory shall not be blotted out.
Their bodies were buried in peace,
And their name liveth to all generations.
Peoples will declare their wisdom,
And the congregation telleth out their praise.

[*From* ECCLESIASTICUS, 44.]

The souls of the righteous are in the hand of God,
And no torment shall touch them.
In the eyes of the foolish they seemed to have died;
And their departure was accounted to be their hurt,
And their journeying away from us to be their ruin:
But they are in peace.
For even if in the sight of men they be punished,
Their hope is full of immortality;
And having borne a little chastening, they shall receive great good
Because God made trial of them, and found them worthy of himself.

A righteous man, though he die before his time, shall be at rest.
For honourable old age is not that which standeth in length of time,
Nor is its measure given by number of years:
But understanding is gray hairs unto men,
And an unspotted life is ripe old age. [*From* WISDOM, 3 and 4.]

The transitoriness of the wicked

We took our fill of the paths of lawlessness and destruction,
And we journeyed through trackless deserts,
But the way of the Lord we knew not.
What did our arrogancy profit us?
And what good have riches and vaunting brought us?
Those things all passed away as a shadow,
And as a message that runneth by:
As a ship passing through the billowy water,
Whereof, when it is gone by, there is no trace to be found,
Neither pathway of its keel in the billows:
Or as when a bird flieth through the air,
No token of her passage is found,
But the light wind, lashed with the stroke of her pinions,
And rent asunder with the violent rush of the moving wings, is passed through,
And afterwards no sign of her coming is found therein:
Or as when an arrow is shot at a mark,
The air disparted closeth up again immediately,
So that men know not where it passed through:
So we also, as soon as we were born, ceased to be;
And of virtue we had no sign to shew,
But in our wickedness we were utterly consumed.

Because the hope of the ungodly man is as chaff carried by the wind,
And as foam vanishing before a tempest;
And is scattered as smoke is scattered by the wind,
And passeth by as the remembrance of a guest that tarrieth but a day. [WISDOM, 5. 7–13.]

Time and chance happen to all

There is a vanity which is done upon the earth; that there be righteous men, unto whom it happeneth according to the work of the wicked; again, there be wicked men, to whom it happeneth according to the work of the righteous: I said that this also is vanity. Then I commended mirth, because a man hath no better thing under the sun, than to eat, and to drink, and to be merry: for that shall abide with him in his labour all the days of his life which God hath given him under the sun.

When I applied mine heart to know wisdom, and to see the business that is done upon the earth: (for also there is that neither day nor night seeth sleep with his eyes:) then I beheld all the work of God, that man cannot find out the work that is done under the sun: because however much a man labour to seek it out, yet he shall not find it; yea moreover, though a wise man think to know it, yet shall he not be able to find it. For all this I laid to my heart, even to explore all this; that the righteous, and the wise, and their works, are in the hand of God: whether it be love or hatred, man knoweth it not; all is before them. All things come alike to all: there is one event to the righteous and to the wicked; to the good and to the clean and to the unclean; to him that sacrificeth and to him that sacrificeth not: as is the good, so is the sinner; and he that sweareth, as he that feareth an oath. This is an evil in all that is done under the sun, that there is one event unto all: yea also, the heart of the sons of men is full of evil, and madness is in their heart while they live, and after that they go to the dead. For to him that is joined with all the living there is hope: for a living dog is better than a dead lion. For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not any thing, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten. As well their love, as their hatred and their envy, is now perished; neither have they any more a portion for ever in any thing that is done under the sun.

Go thy way, eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart; for God hath already accepted thy works. Let thy garments be always white; and let not thy head lack ointment. Live joyfully with the wife whom thou lovest all the days of the life of thy vanity, which he hath given thee under the sun, all the days of thy vanity: for that is thy portion in life, and in thy labour wherein thou labourest under the sun. Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do,

do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest.

I returned, and saw under the sun, that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favour to men of skill; but time and chance happeneth to them all. For man also knoweth not his time: as the fishes that are taken in an evil net, and as the birds that are caught in the snare, even so are the sons of men snared in an evil time, when it falleth suddenly upon them.

[*From* ECCLESIASTES, 8 and 9.]

4. RULES OF LIFE

Advice to young men

My son, gather instruction from thy youth up:
And even unto hoar hairs thou shalt find wisdom.
Come unto her as one that ploweth and soweth,
And wait for her good fruits;
For thy toil shall be little in the tillage of her,
And thou shalt eat of her fruits right soon.
How exceeding harsh is she to the unlearned!
And he that is without understanding will not abide in her.
As a mighty stone of trial shall she rest upon him;
And he will not delay to cast her from him.
For wisdom is according to her name; and she is not manifest unto many.

Give ear, my son, and accept my judgement,
And refuse not my counsel,
And bring thy feet into her fetters,
And thy neck into her chain.
Put thy shoulder under her, and bear her,
And be not grieved with her bonds.
Come unto her with all thy soul,
And keep her ways with thy whole power.
Search, and seek, and she shall be made known unto thee;
And when thou hast got hold of her, let her not go.
For at the last thou shalt find her rest;
And she shall be turned for thee into gladness.
And her fetters shall be to thee for a covering of strength,
And her chains for a robe of glory.
For there is a golden ornament upon her,
And her bands are a riband of blue.
Thou shalt put her on as a robe of glory,
And shalt array thee with her as a crown of rejoicing.

My son, if thou wilt, thou shalt be instructed;
And if thou wilt yield thy soul, thou shalt be prudent.
If thou love to hear, thou shalt receive;

And if thou incline thine ear, thou shalt be wise.
Stand thou in the multitude of the elders;
And whoso is wise, cleave thou unto him.
Be willing to listen to every godly discourse;
And let not the proverbs of understanding escape thee.
If thou seest a man of understanding, get thee betimes unto him,
And let thy foot wear out the steps of his doors.
Let thy mind dwell upon the ordinances of the Lord,
And meditate continually in his commandments:
He shall establish thine heart,
And thy desire of wisdom shall be given unto thee.

[ECCLESIASTICUS, 6. 18–end.]

Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgement. Therefore remove sorrow from thy heart, and put away evil from thy flesh: for youth and the prime of life are vanity. Remember also thy Creator in the days of thy youth, or ever the evil days come, and the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them; or ever the sun, and the light, and the moon, and the stars, be darkened, and the clouds return after the rain: in the day when the keepers of the house shall tremble, and the strong men shall bow themselves, and the grinders cease because they are few, and those that look out of the windows be darkened, and the doors shall be shut in the street; when the sound of the grinding is low, and one shall rise up at the voice of a bird, and all the daughters of music shall be brought low; yea, they shall be afraid of that which is high, and terrors shall be in the way; and the almond tree shall blossom, and the grasshopper shall be a burden, and the caper-berry shall fail: because man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets: or ever the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern; and the dust return to the earth as it was, and the spirit return unto God who gave it. [*From* ECCLESIASTES, 11 and 12.]

What to aim at in life

The life of one that laboureth, and is contented, shall be made sweet;
And he that findeth a treasure is above both.
Children and the building of a city establish a man's name;
And a blameless wife is counted above both.
Wine and music rejoice the heart;
And the love of wisdom is above both.
The pipe and the psaltery make pleasant melody;
And a pleasant tongue is above both.

Thine eye shall desire grace and beauty;
And above both the green blade of corn.
A friend and a companion never meet amiss;
And a wife with her husband is above both.
Brethren and succour are for a time of affliction;
And almsgiving is a deliverer above both.
Gold and silver will make the foot stand sure;
And counsel is esteemed above them both.
Riches and strength will lift up the heart;
And the fear of the Lord is above both:
There is nothing wanting in the fear of the Lord,
And there is no need to seek help therein.
The fear of the Lord is as a garden of blessing,
And covereth a man above all glory.

[ECCLESIASTICUS, 40. 18–27.]

Free Will

Say not thou, It is through the Lord that I fell away;
For thou shalt not do the things that he hateth.
Say not thou, It is he that caused me to err;
For he hath no need of a sinful man.
The Lord hateth every abomination;
And they that fear him love it not.
He himself made man from the beginning,
And left him in the hand of his own counsel.
If thou wilt, thou shalt keep the commandments;
And to perform faithfulness is of thine own good pleasure.
He hath set fire and water before thee:
Thou shalt stretch forth thy hand unto whichsoever thou wilt.
Before man is life and death;
And whichsoever he liketh, it shall be given him.
For great is the wisdom of the Lord:
He is mighty in power, and beholdeth all things;
And his eyes are upon them that fear him;
And he will take knowledge of every work of man.
He hath not commanded any man to be ungodly;
And he hath not given any man licence to sin.

[ECCLESIASTICUS, 15. 11–end.]

The Tongue

If thou blow a spark, it shall burn;
And if thou spit upon it, it shall be quenched:
And both these shall come out of thy mouth.
Curse the whisperer and double-tongued:
For he hath destroyed many that were at peace.
A third person's tongue hath shaken many,
And dispersed them from nation to nation;

And it hath pulled down strong cities,
And overthrown the houses of great men.
A third person's tongue hath cast out brave women,
And deprived them of their labours.
He that hearkeneth unto it shall not find rest,
Nor shall he dwell quietly.
The stroke of a whip maketh a mark in the flesh;
But the stroke of a tongue will break bones.
Many have fallen by the edge of the sword:
Yet not so many as they that have fallen because of the tongue.
Happy is he that is sheltered from it,
That hath not passed through the wrath thereof;
That hath not drawn its yoke,
And hath not been bound with its bands.
For the yoke thereof is a yoke of iron,
And the bands thereof are bands of brass.
The death thereof is an evil death;
And Hades were better than it.
It shall not have rule over godly men;
And they shall not be burned in its flame.
They that forsake the Lord shall fall into it;
And it shall burn among them, and shall not be quenched:
It shall be sent forth upon them as a lion;
And as a leopard it shall destroy them.
Look that thou hedge thy possession about with thorns;
Bind up thy silver and thy gold;
And make a balance and a weight for thy words;
And make a door and a bar for thy mouth.
Take heed lest thou slip therein;
Lest thou fall before one that lieth in wait.
A slip on a pavement is better than a slip with the tongue.

[*From* ECCLESIASTICUS, 20 and 28.]

Gossip

Never repeat what is told thee,
And thou shalt fare never the worse.
Whether it be of friend or foe, tell it not;
And unless it is a sin to thee, reveal it not.
For he hath heard thee, and observed thee,
And when the time cometh he will hate thee.
Hast thou heard a word? let it die with thee:
Be of good courage, it will not burst thee.
A fool will travail in pain with a word,
As a woman in labour with a child.
As an arrow that sticketh in the flesh of the thigh,
So is a word in a fool's belly.

He that revealeth secrets destroyeth credit,
And shall not find a friend to his mind.
Love a friend, and keep faith with him:
But if thou reveal his secrets,
Thou shalt not pursue after him:
For as a man hath destroyed his enemy,
So hast thou destroyed the friendship of thy neighbour.
And as a bird which thou hast loosed out of thy hand,
So hast thou let thy neighbour go, and thou wilt not catch him again: .
Pursue him not, for he is gone far away,
And hath escaped as a gazelle out of the snare.
For a wound may be bound up, and after reviling there may be a reconcilement;
But he that revealeth secrets hath lost hope.

[*From* ECCLESIASTICUS, 19 and 27.]

Faintheartedness

If thou faint in the day of adversity,
Thy strength is small. [PROVERBS, 24. 10.]

Laziness

He that is slack in his work
Is brother to him that is a destroyer.

I went by the field of the slothful,
And by the vineyard of the man void of understanding;
And, lo, it was all grown over with thorns,
The face thereof was covered with nettles,
And the stone wall thereof was broken down.

Go to the ant, thou sluggard;
Consider her ways, and be wise:
Which having no chief,
Overseer, or ruler,
Provideth her meat in the summer,
And gathereth her food in the harvest.
How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard?
When wilt thou arise out of thy sleep?
Yet a little sleep, a little slumber,
A little folding of the hands to sleep:
So shall thy poverty come as a robber,
And thy want as an armed man.

The sluggard saith, There is a lion in the way;
A lion is in the streets.
As the door turneth upon its hinges,
So doth the sluggard upon his bed.
The sluggard burieth his hand in the dish;

It wearieth him to bring it again to his mouth.
The sluggard is wiser in his own conceit
Than seven men that can render a reason.

[*From* PROVERBS, 6, 18, 24, 26.]

Modesty

Put not thyself forward in the presence of the king,
And stand not in the place of great men:
For better is it that it be said unto thee, Come up hither;
Than that thou shouldest be put lower in the presence of the prince,
Whom thine eyes have seen. [*From* PROVERBS, 25.]

My son, go on with thy business in meekness;
So shalt thou be beloved of an acceptable man.
The greater thou art, humble thyself the more,
And thou shalt find favour before the Lord.
For great is the potency of the Lord,
And he is glorified of them that are lowly.
Seek not things that are too hard for thee,
And search not out things that are above thy strength.
The things that have been commanded thee, think thereupon;
For thou hast no need of the things that are secret.
Be not over busy in thy superfluous works:
For more things are shewed unto thee than men can understand.
For the conceit of many hath led them astray;
And evil surmising hath caused their judgement to slip.

[*From* ECCLESIASTICUS, 3.]

Jealousy

Wrath is cruel, and anger is outrageous;
But who is able to stand before jealousy? [PROVERBS, 27. 4.]

5. DOMESTIC LIFE

Home

The chief thing for life is water, and bread,
And a garment, and a house to cover shame.
Better is the life of a poor man under a shelter of logs,
Than sumptuous fare in another man's house.
With little or with much, be well satisfied.
It is a miserable life to go from house to house:
And where thou art a sojourner, thou shalt not dare to open thy mouth.
Thou shalt entertain, and give to drink, and have no thanks:
And besides this thou shalt hear bitter words.
Come hither, thou sojourner, furnish a table,
And if thou hast aught in thy hand, feed me with it.
Go forth, thou sojourner, from the face of honour;
My brother is come to be my guest; I have need of my house.

These things are grievous to a man of understanding;
The upbraiding of house-room, and the reproaching of the money-lender. [ECCLESIASTICUS, 29. 21–28.]

Honour to Parents

My son, help thy father in his old age;
And grieve him not as long as he liveth.
And if he fail in understanding, have patience with him;
And dishonour him not while thou art in thy full strength.
For the relieving of thy father shall not be forgotten:
And instead of sins it shall be added to build thee up.
In the day of thine affliction it shall remember thee;
As fair weather upon ice,
So shall thy sins also melt away.
He that forsaketh his father is as a blasphemer;
And he that provoketh his mother is cursed of the Lord.
[ECCLESIASTICUS, 3. 12–16.]

Good Women

A virtuous woman who can find?
For her price is far above rubies.
The heart of her husband trusteth in her,
And he shall have no lack of gain.
She doeth him good and not evil
All the days of her life.
She seeketh wool and flax,
And worketh willingly with her hands.
She is like the merchant-ships;
She bringeth her food from afar.
She riseth also while it is yet night,
And giveth meat to her household,
And their task to her maidens.
She considereth a field, and buyeth it:
With the fruit of her hands she planteth a vineyard.
She girdeth her loins with strength,
And maketh strong her arms.
She perceiveth that her merchandise is profitable:
Her lamp goeth not out by night.
She layeth her hands to the distaff,
And her hands hold the spindle.
She spreadeth out her hand to the poor;
Yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy.
She is not afraid of the snow for her household;
For all her household are clothed with scarlet.
She maketh for herself carpets of tapestry;
Her clothing is fine linen and purple.
Her husband is known in the gates,

When he sitteth among the elders of the land.
She maketh linen garments and selleth them;
And delivereth girdles unto the merchant.
Strength and dignity are her clothing;
And she laugheth at the time to come.
She openeth her mouth with wisdom;
And the law of kindness is on her tongue.
She looketh well to the ways of her household,
And eateth not the bread of idleness.
Her children rise up, and call her blessed;
Her husband also, and he praiseth her, saying:
Many daughters have done virtuously,
But thou excellest them all.
Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain:
But a woman that feareth the LORD, she shall be praised.
Give her of the fruit of her hands;
And let her works praise her in the gates.

[PROVERBS, 31. 10–end.]

A silent woman is a gift of the Lord.

[ECCLESIASTICUS, 26. 14.]

Bad Women

I will rather dwell with a lion and a dragon,
Than keep house with a wicked woman.
The wickedness of a woman changeth her look,
And darkeneth her countenance as a bear doth.
Her husband shall sit at meat among his neighbours,
And when he heareth it he sigheth bitterly.
All malice is but little to the malice of a woman:
Let the portion of a sinner fall on her.
As the going up a sandy way is to the feet of the aged,
So is a wife full of words to a quiet man.
Throw not thyself upon the beauty of a woman;
And desire not a woman for her beauty.
There is anger, and impudence, and great reproach,
If a woman maintain her husband.
A wicked woman is abasement of heart,
And sadness of countenance, and a wounded heart:
A woman that will not make her husband happy
Is as hands that hang down, and palsied knees.
From a woman was the beginning of sin;
And because of her we all die.
Give not water an outlet;
Neither to a wicked woman freedom of speech.
If she go not as thou wouldest have her,
Cut her off from thy flesh. [ECCLESIASTICUS, 25. 16–end.]

A continual dropping in a very rainy day
And a contentious woman are alike:
He that would restrain her restraineth the wind,
And his right hand encountereth oil. [PROVERBS, 27. 15, 16.]

It is better to dwell in the corner of the housetop,
Than with a contentious woman in a wide house.
[PROVERBS, 25. 24.]

Health

Better is a poor man, being sound and strong of constitution,
Than a rich man that is plagued in his body.
Health and a good constitution are better than all gold;
And a strong body than wealth without measure.
There is no riches better than health of body;
And there is no gladness above the joy of the heart.
Death is better than a bitter life,
And eternal rest than a continual sickness.
Good things poured out upon a mouth that is closed
Are as messes of meat laid upon a grave.

Give not over thy soul to sorrow;
And afflict not thyself in thine own counsel.
Gladness of heart is the life of a man;
And the joyfulness of a man is length of days.
Love thine own soul, and comfort thy heart:
And remove sorrow far from thee;
For sorrow hath destroyed many,
And there is no profit therein.
Envy and wrath shorten a man's days;
And care bringeth old age before the time.
A cheerful and good heart
Will have a care of his meat and diet.
[*From* ECCLESIASTICUS, 30.]

Doctors

Honour a physician according to thy need of him with the honours due unto him:
For verily the Lord hath created him.
For from the Most High cometh healing;
And from the king he shall receive a gift.
The skill of the physician shall lift up his head;
And in the sight of great men he shall be admired.
The Lord created medicines out of the earth;
And a prudent man will have no disgust at them.
Was not water made sweet with wood,
That the virtue thereof might be known?

And he gave men skill,
That they might be glorified in his marvellous works.
With them doth he heal a man,
And taketh away his pain.
With these will the apothecary make a confection;
And his works shall not be brought to an end;
And from him is peace upon the face of the earth.
My son, in thy sickness be not negligent;
But pray unto the Lord, and he shall heal thee.
Put away wrong doing, and order thine hands aright,
And cleanse thy heart from all manner of sin.
Give a sweet savour, and a memorial of fine flour;
And make fat thine offering, as one that is not.
Then give place to the physician, for verily the Lord hath created him;
And let him not go from thee, for thou hast need of him.
There is a time when in their very hands is the issue for good.
For they also shall beseech the Lord,
That he may prosper them in giving relief and in healing for the maintenance of life.
He that sinneth before his Maker,
Let him fall into the hands of the physician.

[ECCLESIASTICUS, 38. 1–9.]

6. LOVE SONGS

A Bride's Song

The voice of my beloved! behold, he cometh,
Leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills.
My beloved is like a roe or a young hart:
Behold, he standeth behind our wall,
He looketh in at the windows,
He sheweth himself through the lattice.

My beloved spake, and said unto me,
Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away.
For, lo, the winter is past.
The rain is over and gone;
The flowers appear on the earth;
The time of the singing of birds is come,
And the voice of the turtle is heard in our land;
The fig tree ripeneth her green figs,
And the vines are in blossom,
They give forth their fragrance.
Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away.
O my dove, that art in the clefts of the rock, in the covert of the steep place,

Let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice;
For sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely.

My beloved is mine, and I am his:
He feedeth his flock among the lilies.
Until the day be cool, and the shadows flee away,
Turn, my beloved, and be thou like a roe or a young hart
Upon the mountains of Bether.

[*From* THE SONG OF SONGS, 2.][1]

A Bridegroom's Song

Come with me from Lebanon, my bride,
With me from Lebanon:
Look from the top of Amana,
From the top of Senir and Hermon,
From the lions' dens,
From the mountains of the leopards.
Thou hast ravished my heart, my sister, my bride;
Thou hast ravished my heart with one of thine eyes,
With one chain of thy neck.
How fair is thy love, my sister, my bride!
How much better is thy love than wine!
And the smell of thine ointments than all manner of spices!
Thy lips, O my bride, drop as the honeycomb:
Honey and milk are under thy tongue;
And the smell of thy garments is like the smell of Lebanon.
A garden shut up is my sister, my bride;
A spring shut up, a fountain sealed.
Thy shoots are an orchard of pomegranates, with precious fruits;
Henna with spikenard plants,
Spikenard and saffron,
Calamus and cinnamon, with all trees of frankincense;
Myrrh and aloes, with all the chief spices.
Thou art a fountain of gardens,
A well of living waters,
And flowing streams from Lebanon.

[*From* THE SONG OF SONGS, 4.]

Love

Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm:
For love is strong as death;
Jealousy is cruel as the grave:
The flashes thereof are flashes of fire,
A very flame of the LORD.
Many waters cannot quench love,
Neither can the floods drown it:

[1] These extracts from *The Song of Songs* are given as love songs without prejudice to any allegorical meaning they may possess.

If a man would give all the substance of his house for love,
He would utterly be contemned.

[*From* THE SONG OF SONGS, 8.]

7. FRIENDS AND NEIGHBOURS

Friendship

Timber girt and bound into a building shall not be loosed with shaking:
So a heart established in due season on well advised counsel shall not be afraid.
A heart settled upon a thoughtful understanding
Is as an ornament of plaister on a polished wall.
Pales set on a high place will not stand against the wind:
So a fearful heart in the imagination of a fool will not stand against any fear.

He that pricketh the eye will make tears to fall;
And he that pricketh the heart maketh it to shew feeling.
Whoso casteth a stone at birds frayeth them away;
And he that upbraideth a friend will dissolve friendship.
If thou hast drawn a sword against a friend, despair not;
For there may be a returning.
If thou hast opened thy mouth against a friend, fear not;
For there may be a reconciling;
Except it be for upbraiding, and arrogance, and disclosing of a secret, and a treacherous blow:
For these things every friend will flee.

Gain trust with thy neighbour in his poverty,
That in his prosperity thou mayest have gladness:
Abide stedfast unto him in the time of his affliction,
That thou mayest be heir with him in his inheritance.
Before fire is the vapour and smoke of a furnace;
So revilings before bloodshed.
I will not be ashamed to shelter a friend;
And I will not hide myself from his face:
And if any evil happen unto me because of him,
Every one that heareth it will beware of him.

[ECCLESIASTICUS, 22. 16–26.]

Forsake not an old friend;
For the new is not comparable to him:
As new wine, so is a new friend;
If it become old, thou shalt drink it with gladness.

[ECCLESIASTICUS, 9. 10.]

Sweet words will multiply a man's friends;
And a fair-speaking tongue will multiply courtesies.
Let those that are at peace with thee be many;
But thy counsellors one of a thousand.

If thou wouldest get thee a friend, get him by proving,
And be not in haste to trust him.
For there is a friend that is so for his own occasion;
And he will not continue in the day of thy affliction.
And there is a friend that turneth to enmity;
And he will discover strife to thy reproach.
And there is a friend that is a companion at the table;
And he will not continue in the day of thy affliction.
And in thy prosperity he will be as thyself,
And will be bold over thy servants:
If thou shalt be brought low, he will be against thee,
And will hide himself from thy face.
Separate thyself from thine enemies;
And beware of thy friends.

A faithful friend is a strong defence;
And he that hath found him hath found a treasure.
There is nothing that can be taken in exchange for a faithful friend;
And his excellency is beyond price.
A faithful friend is a medicine of life;
And they that fear the Lord shall find him.
He that feareth the Lord directeth his friendship aright;
For as he is, so is his neighbour also.

[ECCLESIASTICUS, 6. 5–17.]

Choice of Company

Bring not every man into thine house;
For many are the plots of the deceitful man.
As a decoy partridge in a cage, so is the heart of a proud man;
And as one that is a spy, he looketh upon thy falling.
For he lieth in wait to turn things that are good into evil:
And in things that are praiseworthy he will lay blame.
From a spark of fire a heap of many coals is kindled;
And a sinful man lieth in wait for blood.
Take heed of an evil-doer, for he contriveth wicked things;
Lest haply he bring upon thee blame for ever.
Receive a stranger into thine house, and he will distract thee with brawls,
And estrange thee from thine own.

If thou do good, know to whom thou doest it;
And thy good deeds shall have thanks.
Do good to a godly man, and thou shalt find a recompense;
And if not from him, yet from the Most High.
There shall no good come to him that continueth to do evil,
Nor to him that giveth no alms.
Give to the godly man,
And help not the sinner.

Do good to one that is lowly,
And give not to an ungodly man:
Keep back his bread, and give it not to him,
Lest he overmaster thee thereby:
For thou shalt receive twice as much evil
For all the good thou shalt have done unto him.
For the Most High also hateth sinners,
And will repay vengeance unto the ungodly.
Give to the good man,
And help not the sinner.

A man's friend will not be fully tried in prosperity;
And his enemy will not be hidden in adversity.
In a man's prosperity his enemies are grieved;
And in his adversity even his friend will be separated from him.
Never trust thine enemy:
For like as the brass rusteth, so is his wickedness.
Though he humble himself, and go crouching,
Yet take good heed, and beware of him,
And thou shalt be unto him as one that hath wiped a mirror,
And thou shalt know that he hath not utterly rusted it.
Set him not by thee,
Lest he overthrow thee and stand in thy place;
Let him not sit on thy right hand,
Lest he seek to take thy seat,
And at the last thou acknowledge my words,
And be pricked with my sayings.
Who will pity a charmer that is bitten with a serpent,
Or any that come nigh wild beasts?
Even so who will pity him that goeth to a sinner,
And is mingled with him in his sins?
For a while he will abide with thee,
And if thou give way, he will not hold out.
And the enemy will speak sweetly with his lips,
And in his heart take counsel how to overthrow thee into a pit:
The enemy will weep with his eyes,
And if he find opportunity, he will not be satiated with blood.
If adversity meet thee, thou shalt find him there before thee;
And as though he would help thee, he will trip up thy heel.
He will shake his head, and clap his hands,
And whisper much, and change his countenance.

He that toucheth pitch shall be defiled;
And he that hath fellowship with a proud man shall become like unto him.
Take not up a burden above thy strength;
And have no fellowship with one that is mightier and richer than thyself.

What fellowship shall the earthen pot have with the kettle?
This shall smite, and that shall be dashed in pieces.
The rich man doeth a wrong, and he threateneth withal:
The poor is wronged, and he shall intreat withal.
If thou be profitable, he will make merchandise of thee;
And if thou be in want, he will forsake thee.
If thou have substance, he will live with thee;
And he will make thee bare, and will not be sorry.
Hath he had need of thee? then he will deceive thee,
And smile upon thee, and give thee hope:
He will speak thee fair, and say, What needest thou?
And he will shame thee by his meats,
Until he have made thee bare twice or thrice,
And at the last he will laugh thee to scorn:
Afterward will he see thee, and will forsake thee,
And shake his head at thee.
Beware that thou be not deceived, and brought low in thy mirth.
If a mighty man invite thee, be retiring,
And so much the more will he invite thee.
Press not upon him, lest thou be thrust back;
And stand not far off, lest thou be forgotten.
Affect not to speak with him as an equal,
And believe not his many words:
For with much talk will he try thee,
And in a smiling manner will search thee out.
He that keepeth not to himself words spoken is unmerciful;
And he will not spare to hurt and to bind.
Keep them to thyself, and take earnest heed,
For thou walkest in peril of thy falling.

Every living creature loveth his like,
And every man loveth his neighbour.
All flesh consorteth according to kind,
And a man will cleave to his like.
What fellowship shall the wolf have with the lamb?
So is the sinner unto the godly.
What peace is there between the hyena and the dog?
And what peace between the rich man and the poor?
Wild asses are the prey of lions in the wilderness;
So poor men are pasture for the rich.
Lowliness is an abomination to a proud man;
So a poor man is an abomination to the rich.

A rich man when he is shaken is held up of his friends;
But one of low degree being down is thrust away also by his friends.
When a rich man is fallen, there are many helpers;
He speaketh things not to be spoken, and men justify him:
A man of low degree falleth, and men rebuke him withal;

He uttereth wisdom, and no place is allowed him.
A rich man speaketh, and all keep silence;
And what he saith they extol to the clouds:
A poor man speaketh, and they say, Who is this?
And if he stumble, they will help to overthrow him.

Riches are good that have no sin;
And poverty is evil in the mouth of the ungodly.

[ECCLESIASTICUS, 11. 29–13. 24.]

Neighbours

Let thy foot be seldom in thy neighbour's house;
Lest he be weary of thee, and hate thee.
A man that beareth false witness against his neighbour
Is a maul, and a sword, and a sharp arrow.
Confidence in an unfaithful man in time of trouble
Is like a broken tooth, and a foot out of joint.
As one that taketh off a garment in cold weather, and as vinegar upon nitre,
So is he that singeth songs to an heavy heart.
If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat;
And if he be thirsty, give him water to drink:
For thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head,
And the LORD shall reward thee. [PROVERBS, 25. 17–22.]

Dining out

Sittest thou at a great table? be not greedy upon it,
And say not, Many are the things upon it.
Remember that an evil eye is a wicked thing:
What hath been created more evil than an eye?
Therefore it sheddeth tears from every face.
Stretch not thine hand whithersoever it looketh,
And thrust not thyself with it into the dish.
Consider thy neighbour's liking by thine own;
And be discreet in every point.
Eat, as becometh a man, those things which are set before thee;
And eat not greedily, lest thou be hated.
Be first to leave off for manners' sake;
And be not insatiable, lest thou offend.
And if thou sittest among many,
Reach not out thy hand before them.

How sufficient to a well-mannered man is a very little,
And he doth not breathe hard upon his bed.
Healthy sleep cometh of moderate eating;
He riseth early, and his wits are with him:
The pain of wakefulness, and colic,
And griping, are with an insatiable man.
And if thou hast been forced to eat,

Rise up in the midst thereof, and thou shalt have rest.
Hear me, my son, and despise me not,
And at the last thou shalt find my words true:
In all thy works be quick,
And no disease shall come unto thee.

Him that is liberal of his meat the lips shall bless;
And the testimony of his excellence shall be believed.
Him that is a niggard of his meat the city shall murmur at;
And the testimony of his niggardness shall be sure.

Shew not thyself valiant in wine;
For wine hath destroyed many.
The furnace proveth the temper of steel by dipping;
So doth wine prove hearts in the quarrelling of the proud.
Wine is as good as life to men,
If thou drink it in its measure:
What life is there to a man that is without wine?
And it hath been created to make men glad.
Wine drunk in season and to satisfy
Is joy of heart, and gladness of soul:
Wine drunk largely is bitterness of soul,
With provocation and conflict.
Drunkenness increaseth the rage of a fool unto his hurt;
It diminisheth strength, and addeth wounds.

Rebuke not thy neighbour at a banquet of wine,
Neither set him at nought in his mirth:
Speak not unto him a word of reproach,
And press not upon him by asking back a debt.

Have they made thee ruler of a feast?
Be not lifted up,
Be thou among them as one of them;
Take thought for them, and so sit down.
And when thou hast done all thy office, take thy place,
That thou mayest be gladdened on their account,
And receive a crown for thy well ordering.

Speak, thou that art the elder, for it becometh thee, but with sound knowledge;
And hinder not music.
Pour not out talk where there is a performance of music,
And display not thy wisdom out of season.
As a signet of carbuncle in a setting of gold,
So is a concert of music in a banquet of wine.
As a signet of emerald in a work of gold,
So is a strain of music with pleasant wine.

Speak, young man, if there be need of thee;
Yet scarcely if thou be twice asked.

Sum up thy speech, many things in few words;
Be as one that knoweth and yet holdeth his tongue.
If thou be among great men, behave not as their equal;
And when another is speaking, make not much babbling.
Before thunder speedeth lightning;
And before a shamefast man favour shall go forth.
Rise up betimes, and be not the last;
Get thee home quickly and loiter not:
There take thy pastime, and do what is in thy heart;
And sin not by proud speech:
And for these things bless him that made thee,
And giveth thee to drink freely of his good things.

[ECCLESIASTICUS, 31. 12—32. 13.]

Wine

Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions?
Who hath complaining? who hath wounds without cause?
Who hath redness of eyes?
They that tarry long at the wine;
They that go to seek out mixed wine.
Look not thou upon the wine when it is red,
When it giveth its colour in the cup,
When it goeth down smoothly:
At the last it biteth like a serpent,
And stingeth like an adder.
Thine eyes shall behold strange things,
And thine heart shall utter froward things.

[PROVERBS, 23. 29–33.]

Lending and Suretiship

He that sheweth mercy will lend unto his neighbour;
And he that strengtheneth him with his hand keepeth the commandments.
Lend to thy neighbour in time of his need;
And pay thou thy neighbour again in due season.
Confirm thy word, and keep faith with him;
And at all seasons thou shalt find what thou needest.

Many have reckoned a loan as a windfall,
And have given trouble to those that helped them.
Till he hath received, he will kiss a man's hands;
And for his neighbour's money he will speak submissly:
And when payment is due, he will prolong the time,
And return words of heaviness, and complain of the times.
If he prevail, he shall hardly receive the half;
And he will count it as a windfall:
If not, he hath deprived him of his money,
And he hath gotten him for an enemy without cause:

He will pay him with cursings and railings;
And for honour he will pay him disgrace.
Many on account of men's ill-dealing have turned away;
They have feared to be defrauded for nought.

Howbeit with a man in poor estate be longsuffering;
And let him not wait for thine alms.
Help a poor man for the commandment's sake;
And according to his need send him not empty away.
Lose thy money for a brother and a friend;
And let it not rust under the stone to be lost.
Bestow thy treasure according to the commandments of the Most High;
And it shall profit thee more than gold.
Shut up alms in thy store-chambers;
And it shall deliver thee out of all affliction:
It shall fight for thee against thine enemy
Better than a mighty shield and a ponderous spear.

A good man will be surety for his neighbour;
And he that hath lost shame will fail him.
Forget not the good offices of thy surety;
For he hath given his life for thee.
A sinner will overthrow the good estate of his surety;
And he that is of an unthankful mind will leave him in danger that delivered him.
Suretiship hath undone many that were prospering,
And shaken them as a wave of the sea:
Mighty men hath it driven from their homes;
And they wandered among strange nations.
A sinner that falleth into suretiship,
And undertaketh contracts for work shall fall into lawsuits.
Help thy neighbour according to thy power,
And take heed to thyself that thou fall not to the same.

[ECCLESIASTICUS, 29. 1–20.]

Lend not to a man that is mightier than thyself;
And if thou lend, be as one that hath lost.
Be not surety above thy power:
And if thou be surety, take thought as one that will have to pay.

[ECCLESIASTICUS, 8. 12, 13.]

Consideration for others

My son, deprive not the poor of his living,
And make not the needy eyes to wait long.
Make not a hungry soul sorrowful;
Neither provoke a man in his distress.
To a heart that is provoked add not more trouble;
And defer not to give to him that is in need.

Reject not a suppliant in his affliction;
And turn not away thy face from a poor man.
Turn not away thine eye from one that asketh of thee,
And give none occasion to a man to curse thee:
For if he curse thee in the bitterness of his soul,
He that made him will hear his supplication.

Get thyself the love of the congregation;
And to a great man bow thy head.
Incline thine ear to a poor man,
And answer him with peaceable words in meekness.
Deliver him that is wronged from the hand of him that wrongeth him;
And be not fainthearted in giving judgement.
Be as a father unto the fatherless,
And instead of a husband unto their mother:
So shalt thou be as a son of the Most High,
And he shall love thee more than thy mother doth.

[ECCLESIASTICUS, 4. 1–10.]

Stinginess

Riches are not comely for a niggard;
And what should an envious man do with money?
He that gathereth by taking from his own soul gathereth for others;
And others shall revel in his goods.
He that is evil to himself, to whom will he be good?
And he shall not rejoice in his possessions.
There is none more evil than he that envieth himself;
And this is a recompense of his wickedness.
Even if he doeth good, he doeth it in forgetfulness;
And at the last he sheweth forth his wickedness.
Evil is he that envieth with his eye,
Turning away the face, and despising the souls of men.
A covetous man's eye is not satisfied with his portion;
And wicked injustice drieth up his soul.
An evil eye is grudging of bread,
And he is miserly at his table. [ECCLESIASTICUS, 14. 3–10.]

8. BUSINESS AND WORK

Trade

A merchant shall hardly keep himself from wrong doing;
And a huckster shall not be acquitted of sin.
Many have sinned for a thing indifferent;
And he that seeketh to multiply gain will turn his eye away.
A nail will stick fast between the joinings of stones;
And sin will thrust itself in between buying and selling.

[*From* ECCLESIASTICUS, 26, 27.]

Workers

The wisdom of the scribe cometh by opportunity of leisure;
And he that hath little business shall become wise.
How shall he become wise that holdeth the plough,
That glorieth in the shaft of the goad,
That driveth oxen, and is occupied in their labours,
And whose discourse is of the stock of bulls?
He will set his heart upon turning his furrows;
And his wakefulness is to give his heifers their fodder.
So is every artificer and workmaster,
That passeth his time by night as by day;
They that cut gravings of signets,
And his diligence is to make great variety;
He will set his heart to preserve likeness in his portraiture,
And will be wakeful to finish his work.
So is the smith sitting by the anvil,
And considering the unwrought iron:
The vapour of the fire will waste his flesh;
And in the heat of the furnace will he wrestle with his work:
The noise of the hammer will be ever in his ear,
And his eyes are upon the pattern of the vessel:
He will set his heart upon perfecting his works,
And he will be wakeful to adorn them perfectly.
So is the potter sitting at his work,
And turning the wheel about with his feet,
Who is alway anxiously set at his work,
And all his handywork is by number;
He will fashion the clay with his arm,
And will bend its strength in front of his feet;
He will apply his heart to finish the glazing;
And he will be wakeful to make clean the furnace.

All these put their trust in their hands;
And each becometh wise in his own work.
Without these shall not a city be inhabited,
And men shall not sojourn nor walk up and down therein.
They shall not be sought for in the council of the people,
And in the assembly they shall not mount on high;
They shall not sit on the seat of the judge,
And they shall not understand the covenant of judgement:
Neither shall they declare instruction and judgement;
And where parables are they shall not be found.
But they will maintain the fabric of the world;
And in the handywork of their craft is their prayer.

[ECCLESIASTICUS, 38. 24–end.]

Riches

Wakefulness that cometh of riches consumeth the flesh,
And the anxiety thereof putteth away sleep.
Wakeful anxiety will crave slumber;
And in a sore disease sleep will be broken.

A rich man toileth in gathering money together;
And when he resteth, he is filled with his good things.
A poor man toileth in lack of substance;
And when he resteth, he becometh needy.
He that loveth gold shall not be justified;
And he that followeth destruction shall himself have his fill of it.
Many have been given over to ruin for the sake of gold;
And their perdition meeteth them face to face.
It is a stumblingblock unto them that sacrifice unto it;
And every fool shall be taken therewith.

[ECCLESIASTICUS, 31. 1–7.]

Weary not thyself to be rich;
Cease from thine own wisdom.
Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not?
For riches certainly make themselves wings,
Like an eagle that flieth toward heaven.

[PROVERBS, 23. 4, 5.]

There is that waxeth rich by his wariness and pinching,
And this is the portion of his reward:
When he saith, I have found rest,
And now will I eat of my goods;
Yet he knoweth not what time shall pass,
And he shall leave them to others, and die.

[ECCLESIASTICUS, 11. 18, 19.]

He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver; nor he that loveth abundance with increase: this also is vanity. When goods increase, they are increased that eat them: and what advantage is there to the owner thereof, saving the beholding of them with his eyes? [ECCLESIASTICUS, 5. 10, 11.]

The diligent farmer

Be thou diligent to know the state of thy flocks,
And look well to thy herds:
For riches are not for ever;
And doth the crown endure unto all generations?
The hay is carried, and the tender grass sheweth itself,
And the herbs of the mountains are gathered in.
The lambs are for thy clothing,
And the goats are the price of the field:

And there will be goats' milk enough for thy food, for the food of thy household;
And maintenance for thy maidens. [PROVERBS, 27. 23–end.]

The Golden Mean

Give me neither poverty nor riches;
Feed me with the food that is needful for me:
Lest I be full, and deny thee, and say, Who is the LORD?
Or lest I be poor, and steal,
And use profanely the name of my God.
[PROVERBS, 30. 8, 9.]

9. SUNDRY NOTES

A few wise sayings

Drink waters out of thine own cistern,
And running waters out of thine own well.
[PROVERBS, 5. 15.]

Can a man take fire in his bosom,
And his clothes not be burned?
Or can one walk upon hot coals,
And his feet not be scorched? [PROVERBS, 6. 27, 28.]

The north wind bringeth forth rain:
So doth a backbiting tongue an angry countenance.
[PROVERBS, 25. 23.]

He that passeth by, and vexeth himself with strife belonging not to him,
Is like one that taketh a dog by the ears.
[PROVERBS, 26. 17.]

Fervent lips and a wicked heart
Are like an earthen vessel overlaid with silver dross.
[PROVERBS, 26. 23.]

Whoso diggeth a pit shall fall therein:
And he that rolleth a stone, it shall return upon him.
[PROVERBS, 26. 27.]

Boast not thyself of to-morrow;
For thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.
[PROVERBS, 27. 1.]

Faithful are the wounds of a friend:
But the kisses of an enemy are profuse. [PROVERBS, 27. 6.]

Be not hasty in thy tongue,
And in thy deeds slack and remiss.
Be not as a lion in thy house,
Nor fanciful among thy servants.
Let not thine hand be stretched out to receive, and closed when thou shouldest repay. [ECCLESIASTICUS, 4. 29–end.]

He that observeth the wind shall not sow;
And he that regardeth the clouds shall not reap.

[ECCLESIASTES, 11. 4.]

If the serpent bite before it be charmed,
Then is there no advantage in the charmer.

[ECCLESIASTES, 10. 11.]

Do nothing without counsel;
And when thou hast once done, repent not.

[ECCLESIASTICUS, 32. 19.]

Birds will resort unto their like;
And truth will return unto them that practise her.

[ECCLESIASTICUS, 27. 9.]

Three Aphorisms

Things never satisfied

The horseleach hath two daughters, crying, Give, give.
There are three things that are never satisfied,
Yea, four that say not, Enough:
The grave; and the barren womb;
The earth that is not satisfied with water;
And the fire that saith not, Enough.

[PROVERBS, 30. 15, 16.]

Things not to be known

There be three things which are too wonderful for me,
Yea, four which I know not:
The way of an eagle in the air;
The way of a serpent upon a rock;
The way of a ship in the midst of the sea;
And the way of a man with a maid.

[PROVERBS, 30. 18, 19.]

Things little but wise

There be four things which are little upon the earth,
But they are exceeding wise.
The ants are a people not strong,
Yet they provide their meat in the summer;
The conies are but a feeble folk,
Yet make they their houses in the rocks;
The locusts have no king,
Yet go they forth all of them by bands;
The lizard taketh hold with her hands,
Yet is she in kings' palaces.

[PROVERBS, 30. 24–28.]

APPENDIX I

Κύριε τίς ἐπίστευσε τῇ ἀκοῇ ἡμῶν; καὶ ὁ βραχίων Κυρίου τίνι ἀπεκαλύφθη; Ἀνηγγείλαμεν ὡς παιδίον ἐναντίον αὐτοῦ, ὡς ῥίζα ἐν γῇ διψώσῃ· οὐκ ἔστιν εἶδος αὐτῳ, οὐδὲ δόξα· καὶ εἴδομεν αὐτὸν, καὶ οὐκ εἶχεν εἶδος οὐδὲ κάλλος· Ἀλλὰ τὸ εἶδος αὐτοῦ ἄτιμον, καὶ ἐκλεῖπον παρὰ τοὺς υἱοὺς τῶν ἀνθρώπων· ἄνθρωπος ἐν πληγῇ ὢν, καὶ εἰδὼς φέρειν μαλακίαν, ὅτι ἀπέστραπται τὸ πρόσωπον αὐτοῦ, ἠτιμάσθη, καὶ οὐκ ἐλογίσθη. Οὗτος τὰς ἁμαρτίας ἡμῶν φέρει, καὶ περὶ ἡμῶν ὀδυνᾶται, καὶ ἡμεῖς ἐλογισάμεθα αὐτὸν εἶναι ἐν πόνῳ, καὶ ἐν πληγῇ, καὶ ἐν κακώσει. Αὐτὸς δὲ ἐτραυματίσθη διὰ τὰς ἁμαρτίας ἡμῶν, καὶ μεμαλάκισται διὰ τὰς ἀνομίας ἡμῶν· παιδεία εἰρήνης ἡμῶν ἐπ' αὐτὸν, τῷ μώλωπι αὐτοῦ ἡμεῖς ἰάθημεν. Πάντες ὡς πρόβατα ἐπλανήθημεν· ἄνθρωπος τῇ ὁδῷ αὐτοῦ ἐπλανήθη· καὶ Κύριος παρέδωκεν αὐτὸν ταῖς ἁμαρτίαις ἡμῶν.

Καὶ αὐτὸς διὰ τὸ κεκακῶσθαι οὐκ ἀνοίγει τὸ στόμα αὐτοῦ· ὡς πρόβατον ἐπὶ σφαγὴν ἤχθη, καὶ ὡς ἀμνὸς ἐναντίον τοῦ κείροντος ἄφωνος, οὕτως οὐκ ἀνοίγει τὸ στόμα. Ἐν τῇ ταπεινώσει ἡ κρίσις αὐτοῦ ἦρθη, τὴν γενεὰν αὐτοῦ τὶς διηγήσεται; ὅτι αἴρεται ἀπὸ τῆς γῆς ἡ ζωὴ αὐτοῦ, ἀπὸ τῶν ἀνομιῶν τοῦ λαοῦ μου ἦχθη εἰς θάνατον. Καὶ δώσω τοὺς πονηροὺς ἀντὶ τῆς ταφῆς αὐτοῦ, καὶ τοὺς πλουσίους ἀντὶ τοῦ θανάτου αὐτοῦ· ὅτι ἀνομίαν οὐκ ἐποίησεν, οὐδὲ δόλον ἐν τῷ στόματι αὐτοῦ. Καὶ Κύριος βούλεται καθαρίσαι αὐτὸν τῆς πληγῆς· ἐὰν δῶτε περὶ ἁμαρτίας, ἡ ψυχὴ ὑμῶν ὄψεται σπέρμα μακρόβιον· καὶ βούλεται Κύριος ἀφελεῖν ἀπὸ τοῦ πόνου τῆς ψυχῆς αὐτοῦ, δεῖξαι αὐτῷ φῶς, καὶ πλάσαι τῇ συνέσει, δικαιῶσαι δίκαιον εὖ δουλεύοντα πολλοῖς, καὶ τὰς ἁμαρτίας αὐτῶν αὐτὸς ἀνοίσει. Διὰ τοῦτο αὐτὸς κληρονομήσει πολλούς, καὶ τῶν ἰσχυρῶν μεριεῖ σκῦλα· ἀνθ' ὧν παρεδόθη εἰς θάνατον ἡ ψυχὴ αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἀνόμοις ἐλογίσθη, καὶ αὐτὸς ἁμαρτίας πολλῶν ἀνήνεγκε, καὶ διὰ τὰς ἀνομίας αὐτῶν παρεδόθη. [ISAIAH 53, Septuagint Version.]

APPENDIX II

OMNES sitientes venite ad aquas: et qui non habetis argentum, properate, emite, et comedite: venite, emite absque argento et absque ulla commutatione vinum et lac. Quare appenditis argentum non in panibus, et laborem vestrum non in saturitate? Audite audientes me, et comedite bonum, et delectabitur in crassitudine anima vestra. Inclinate aurem vestram, et venite ad me: audite, et vivet anima vestra, et feriam vobiscum pactum sempiternum, misericordias David fideles. Ecce testem populis dedi eum, ducem et praeceptorem Gentibus. Ecce gentem, quam nesciebas, vocabis:

et Gentes quae te non cognoverunt, ad te current propter Dominum Deum tuum, et sanctum Israel, quia glorificavit te. Quaerite Dominum, dum inveniri potest: invocate eum, dum prope est. Delinquat impius viam suam, et vir iniquus cogitationes suas, et revertatur ad Dominum, et miserebitur eius, et ad Deum nostrum: quoniam multus est ad ignoscendum. Non enim cogitationes meae, cogitationes vestrae: neque viae vestrae, viae meae, dicit Dominus. Quia sicut exaltantur caeli a terra, sic exultatae sunt viae meae a viis vestris, et cogitationes meae a cogitationibus vestris. Et quomodo descendit imber et nix de caelo, et illuc ultra non revertitur, sed inebriat terram et infundit eam et germinare eam facit, et dat semen ferenti, et panem comedenti: sic erit verbum meum, quod egredietur de ore meo: non revertetur ad me vacuum, sed faciet quaecunque volui, et prosperabitur in his ad quae mihi illud. Quia in laetitia egrediemini, et in pace deducemini: montes et colles cantabunt coram vobis laudem, et omnia ligna regionis plaudent manu. Pro saliunca ascendet abies, et pro artica crescet myrtus: et erit Dominus nominatus in signum aeternum quod non auferetur.

[Isaiah, 55. Vulgate Version.]

NOTE A

The sources and dates of the books of the Old Testament

It is against the whole spirit of this book to introduce any controversial matter. The quotations from the Old Testament are given as they appear in the Bible without prejudice to their authorship or their date. But the work of scholars in their critical examination of the Old Testament has thrown such a flood of light upon the sources and history of its component parts and made the reading of them so far more interesting and illuminative, that no one can now afford to ignore them. It is of course impossible within the scope of a short note to deal with such a complicated problem; but a very brief statement of the position reached by modern scholarship and now almost universally accepted, may suffice to indicate to the reader the general outline of the work and help him to read the books of the Old Testament with greater understanding and enjoyment.

The main point is that many of the books of the Old Testament, *as we now have them*, especially the historical books from Genesis to Nehemiah, were not written as complete contemporary documents but are the work of later compilers working upon several different sources. The traditions of the Hebrews, at first transmitted orally and only committed to writing centuries after the events recorded, passed through many subsequent editings and finally reached their present form quite late in the history of the nation. One instance will suffice as an illustration. The Hexateuch, apart from portions

which may go back to very remote antiquity (such as e.g. the Song of Deborah in the book of Judges) appears to be a compilation from four different sources: two documents known as J and E which were collections of tribal traditions probably written down by two writers in the tenth or ninth centuries B. C. and combined at the end of the eighth century into a single narrative known as JE; a later document known as D (the Deuteronomist); and the last document known as P (the Priestly document) written during the Great Captivity (586–538 B. C.) and the subsequent century. Not long after P was completed, the whole of the sources, JE, D, and P, were joined together and formed the Hexateuch as we now have it. The importance and interest of such a scheme are obvious. It means for instance that those portions of the Hexateuch which are attributed to D were written after the time of Amos, Hosea, and Isaiah and show that 'the Law is the product, not the antecedent, of the prophetic activity'. It also justifies the ascription of considerable portions of Leviticus to Ezekiel or to some one whom he influenced, and explains why the later priestly dogma and ceremonial, though much of it no doubt was of great antiquity, is attributed to the time of Moses in forms which it only can have developed long after his time. The scheme in fact by rearranging the various records in correct chronological order enables the reader to get a coherent view of the gradual evolution of legal ordinances and religious ideas amongst the Hebrews and clears up many of the apparent inconsistences that otherwise baffle him.

This is of course an entirely inadequate presentment of a very complicated problem; but it may suffice to put the reader on the right track. Those who wish to pursue the matter, will find suggestions in Note B, Books to read on the Old Testament. It may perhaps be added for the sake of those to whom such a revolutionary theory of the Bible comes as somewhat of a shock, that it will be found in fact to be quite compatible with a genuine and wholehearted view of the inspiration of the Bible. In fact there are many who hold it absurd and irreverent to attribute the inconsistencies and inaccuracies of the Old Testament as it has come down to us to Divine Inspiration. Their difficulties largely disappear when these errors are seen to be due to the failings of human compilers and when the true nature of the message and work of the Divine Inspirer is seen in a form nearer to the truth.

NOTE B

Books to read on the Old Testament

A few suggestions may be welcome to any reader who wishes to study in more detail the books of the Old Testament. With this object the following list (which is intentionally a short one) has very kindly been drawn up for me by Professor Guillaume. The

list is arranged, as far as possible, in accordance with the Parts into which this book is divided.

PART I

Genesis	S. R. Driver, in the Westminster Commentaries. Methuen, 16*s*. net.
Exodus	S. R. Driver, in the Cambridge Bible. Cambridge University Press, 5*s*. net.
Israel's Settlement in Canaan.	C. F. Burney (the 1917 Schweich Lectures). Oxford University Press, 6*s*. net.

PARTS II AND III

Samuel, I and II	A. R. S. Kennedy, in the Century Bible. Nelson, 3*s*. 6*d*. net each.
Kings, I and II	Skinner, in the Century Bible. Nelson, 3*s*. 6*d*. net each.

PARTS IV–VII

Joel and Amos	S. R. Driver, in the Cambridge Bible. Cambridge University Press, 3*s*. 9*d*. net.
Isaiah, 1–39	Whitehouse, in the Century Bible. 3*s*. 6*d*. net.
Prophecy and Religion	Skinner. Cambridge University Press, 12*s*. 6*d*. net.
Ezekiel	A. B. Davidson, in the Cambridge Bible. Cambridge University Press, 6*s*. net.
Isaiah, 40–66	Skinner, in the Cambridge Bible. Cambridge University Press, 5*s*. net.
The Minor Prophets	S. R. Driver, in the Century Bible. Nelson, 3*s*. 6*d*. net.
Ezra and Nehemiah	Witton Davies, in the Century Bible. 3*s*. 6*d*. net.

PARTS VIII AND IX

Daniel	S. R. Driver, in the Cambridge Bible. Cambridge University Press, 4*s*. 6*d*.
Jerusalem under the High Priests.	Edwyn Bevan. Edward Arnold, 8*s*. 6*d*. net.

I should like to add that for the actual reading of the Old Testament I have myself found nothing more delightful and helpful than Professor Moulton's *Modern Reader's Bible*, presented in modern literary form. For the reading of the Prophets, I should recommend *The Hebrew Prophets* by F. H. Woods and F. E. Powell, in four small and handy volumes, published by the Clarendon Press, with just the kind of introductions and notes that the ordinary

reader needs. A work of an entirely different nature, but one which throws a flood of light on the origins of many of the stories of the Old Testament is Sir James Frazer's *Folklore in the Old Testament*, now published in an abridged form in one volume, altogether a delightful book. A. S. Peake's *The People and the Book* should also be mentioned. For books on the general history of the Ancient East, see Note C.

For a general commentary on the Bible, there is the one-volume New Commentary on Holy Scripture, including the Apocrypha, edited by Charles Gore, Henry Leighton Goudge, and Alfred Guillaume. Apart from actual textual criticism, this commentary contains essays and introductions dealing with the various problems arising out of the books of the Old Testament and also very complete and useful bibliographies for those who want something fuller than the list given above.

NOTE C

The principal Empires of the Ancient world

Naturally the more one knows of the history of the Ancient East, the better background one has for reading the Old Testament. It is quite possible, however, without any profound or prolonged study, to get such a general idea of the Great Powers of the ancient world as will give the reader of the Old Testament sufficient historical background to understand what he reads. Professor Myres's *Dawn of History* will give him what he needs for a general view of the early history of Egypt, Babylonia, and Assyria, and of the 'coming of the Semites'. Professor Hogarth in his *Ancient East* takes up the story much where Professor Myres leaves it and sketches the East from 1000 B. C. to the date when the East fell before Alexander the Great and the predominant world power passed to the West. Both these short but brilliant books are published in the Home University Library at a cost of 2*s*. each, and both contain very useful suggestions for further reading. The same period is covered by Breasted's *Ancient Times* (Gin & Co., 10*s*. 6*d*.) which, however, continues the history of the ancient world through the periods of Greek and Roman ascendancy down to the triumph of the barbarians from Northern Europe and the end of the ancient world.

Apart from such help as is suggested above, it will be useful to the reader to bear in mind a few very simple facts about the principal nations of the East with whom the Hebrews came into contact. On the North there followed in turn the Assyrians, the Babylonians, and the Medes and Persians. On the South was Egypt. On the East lay the desert, on the West the sea. Palestine thus formed the only practicable bridge between the ruling Asiatic power and Egypt, and had in fact an unfortunate geographical position somewhat similar to that of Belgium between France and Germany. If

the Asiatic and Egyptian powers were at war, Palestine became their natural fighting ground and was coveted by each as the only means of access to the other. The relative predominance of either at various times is too complicated for summary statement; it will suffice for the ordinary reader to realize that while Egypt was a constant factor in the South, though sometimes strong and sometimes weak, three great Empires (those of Assyria, Babylon, and Persia) followed each other in turn on the North, and the principal dates of these three powers should be borne in mind.

As regards Assyria and Babylon, it must be remembered also that these two names stand for two branches of what was really but one country. In the North lived the Assyrians, with their capital at Nineveh; in the South lived the Babylonians, with their capital at Babylon. The two branches were perpetually striving for the sovereignty, and the chief power lay first with one and then with the other. One might get a rough parallel if one imagined that England and Scotland had been governed first by the Tudors from London, then by the Stuarts from Edinburgh, and again by the Hanoverians from London. While, however, the relations of the two branches are very complicated and tangled, the facts are fortunately fairly clear and simple during the historical period of the Old Testament.

The Assyrian Ascendancy. In the ninth century B. C. Assyria was in the ascendant, and it was to the Assyrian king that Ahab and Jehu paid tribute. In 745 B. C. Tiglath-Pileser III became king of Assyria and established his country as the paramount oriental power. This empire lasted from 745 B. C. down to the capture of Nineveh in 607[1] B. C. by Nabopolassar, the Chaldaean governor of Babylon, aided by Cyaxares, the Scythian king of the Medes. The principal rulers of this empire are as follows:

	B. C.
Tiglath-Pileser III	745
Shalmaneser IV	727
Sargon (destroyed the Kingdom of Israel)	722
Sennacherib (vainly besieged Jerusalem)	705
Esar-Haddon (received tribute from Manasseh)	681
Asur-bani-pal	668
A succession of unknown rulers.	
Destruction of Nineveh	607[1]

The Babylonian Ascendancy. The new Babylonian empire lasted from the capture of Nineveh in 607 to the capture of Babylon by the Medes and Persians under Cyrus in 539 B. C. The principal rulers of the empire were as follows:

Nabopolassar (Viceroy, 625: king, 612)	612
Nebuchadnezzar[2] (destroyed Jerusalem, 586)	604

[1] The exact date is doubtful. Recent research gives it as 612 B.C.

[2] The correct spelling is Nebuchadrezzar. The popular form is retained as less confusing.

Evil-Merodach (liberated Jehoiachin)	562
Nergal-Shareser	560
Nabonidus	556
In his reign Babylon is destroyed	539

The Persian Ascendancy. With the capture of Babylon by Cyrus, the rule of the East passed to the Persians, whose empire lasted till its destruction by Alexander the Great in 533 B.C. The principal rulers were as follows:

	B.C.
Cyrus	558
Cambyses	528
Smerdis	521
Darius I	521
Xerxes I (The Ahasuerus of the Bible)	485
Artaxerxes I	465
Darius II	424
Artaxerxes II	404
Artaxerxes III	359
Arses	338
Darius III	336
Darius was defeated by Alexander at the Battle of the Issus	333

The Grecian Ascendancy. Palestine now became part of the dominions of Alexander. At his death the East was divided amongst his generals and Palestine, after a period under the Ptolemies, fell eventually to the Seleucid dynasty, whose principal rulers, so far as the Jews were concerned, were as follows:

	B.C.
Seleucus III	227
Antiochus III, the Great	223
Seleucus IV	187
Antiochus IV, Epimanes (he set up the 'Abomination of Desolation' in Jerusalem; revolt of the Jews under the Maccabees 167 B.C.)	175
Antiochus V, Eupator	164

In 142 the Jews obtained their political freedom from the Seleucids.

NOTE D

The book of Daniel

The reference to Belshazzar in the book of Daniel as the last king of Babylon and to Darius the Mede as the conqueror of the city, is at first sight very confusing, especially as later on the writer of the book refers to Belshazzar as the son of Nebuchadnezzar. The last king of Babylon in fact was Nabonidus, and the conqueror of Babylon was Cyrus (see tables in Note C). There was a Belshazzar, but he

was the son of Nabonidus and never reigned in Babylon. Moreover no such person as Darius the Mede is known to history, nor is there any room for him, the whole period being filled with known persons and the historical Darius not beginning his reign till 521 B.C.

The explanation of the difficulty, as of many others in the book, is found in the theory that the book of Daniel was not written at the time of the fall of Babylon (and it does not claim to be) but was written about 165 B.C. during the revolt of the Jews under the Maccabees against Antiochus Epiphanes. It is not within the scope of this book to argue this theory (for books on the subject see Note B). It must suffice to say that it is now generally accepted by scholars. The Editors of the New Commentary say that the reasons for it are decisive and must be accepted. On this showing the book was written during the fierce persecution of the Jews to encourage their resistance by stories of faithful endurance under previous tyrants. Nebuchadnezzar is used as a disguise for Antiochus, and the form of the book is allegorical as it would have been dangerous and useless to publish a direct attack on the king.

It may perhaps be added for the sake of those to whom this theory is new that so far from undermining the value of the book, it adds enormously to its force and vitality. The stories of the fiery furnace and the lions' den are no longer rather fanciful tales but become the battle cries of a heroic historical fight against great odds. The writer is playing the part that Tyrtaeus played at Sparta.

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